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THE

HISTORY

OF

ENGLAND,

FROM THE

INVASION OF JULIUS CÆSAR

TO

The REVOLUTION in 1688.

In EIGHT VOLUMES, illuſtrated with Plates.

By DAVID HUME, Eſq.

A NEW EDITION, with the AUTHOR's laſt CORRECTIONS and IMPROVEMENTS.

To which is prefixed,

A ſhort ACCOUNT of his LIFE, written by Himſelf.

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CONTENTS

OF THE

THIRD VOLUME.

CHAP. XVII.

RICHARD II.

Government during the minority——Insurrection of the common people——Discontents of the barons——Civil commotions——Expulsion or execution of the king's ministers——Cabals of the duke of Gloceſter——Murder of the duke of Gloceſter——Baniſhment of Henry duke of Hereford——Return of Henry——General inſurrection——Depoſition of the king——His murder——His character——Miſcellaneous tranſactions during this reign. Page 1

CHAP. XVIII.

HENRY IV.

Title of the king——An inſurrection——An inſurrection in Wales——The earl of Northumberland rebels——Battle of Shrewſbury——State of Scotland——Parliamentary tranſactions——Death—and character of the king. 61

503277

CHAP. XIX.

HENRY V.

The king's former diſorders——His reformation——The Lollards——Puniſhment of Lord Cobham——State of France——Invaſion of that kingdom——Battle of Azincour——State of France——New invaſion of France——Aſſaſſination of the duke of Burgundy——Treaty of Troye——Marriage of the king——His death—and character——Miſcellaneous tranſactions during this reign. Page 85

CHAP. XX.

HENRY VI.

Government during the minority——State of France——Military operations——Battle of Verneüil——Siege of Orleans——The maid of Orleans——The ſiege of Orleans raiſed——The king of France crowned at Rheims——Prudence of the duke of Bedford——Execution of the maid of Orleans——Defection of the duke of Burgundy——Death of the duke of Bedford——Decline of the Engliſh in France——Truce with France——Marriage of the king with Margaret of Anjou——Murder of the duke of Gloceſter——State of France——Renewal of the war with France——The Engliſh expelled France. 123

CHAP. XXI.

Claim of the duke of York to the crown——The earl of Warwic——Impeachment of the duke of Suffolk——His baniſhment—and death——Popular inſurrection——The parties of York and Lancaſter——Firſt armament of the duke of York——Firſt battle of St. Albans——Battle of Blore-heath—of Northampton——A parliament——Battle of Wakefield——Death of the duke of York——

——Battle

——Battle of Mortimer's Croſs——Second Battle of St. Albans——Edward IV. aſſumes the crown——Miſcellaneous tranſactions of this reign. Page 179

CHAP. XXII.

EDWARD IV.

Battle of Touton——Henry eſcapes into Scotland——A parliament——Battle of Hexham——Henry taken priſoner, and confined to the Tower——King's marriage with the lady Elizabeth Gray——Warwic diſguſted——Alliance with Burgundy——Inſurrection in Yorkſhire——Battle of Banbury——Warwic and Clarence baniſhed——Warwic and Clarence return——Edward IV. expelled——Henry VI. reſtored——Edward IV. returns——Battle of Barnet, and death of Warwic——Battle of Teukeſbury, and murder of prince Edward——Death of Henry VI.————Invaſion of France——Peace of Pecquigni——Trial and execution of the duke of Clarence——Death and character of Edward IV. 216

CHAP. XXIII.

EDWARD V. and RICHARD III.

Edward V.——State of the court——The earl of Rivers arreſted——Duke of Gloceſter protector——Execution of lord Haſtings——The protector aims at the crown——Aſſumes the crown——Murder of Edward V. and of the duke of York——Richard III.——Duke of Buckingham diſcontented——The earl of Richmond——Buckingham executed——Invaſion by the earl of Richmond——Battle of Boſworth——Death and character of Richard III. 266

503277

CHAP. XXIV.

HENRY VII.

Acceſſion of Henry VII.——His title to the crown——King's prejudice againſt the houſe of York——His joyful reception in London——His coronation——Sweating ſickneſs——A parliament——Entail of the crown——King's marriage——An inſurrection——Diſcontents of the people——Lambert Simnel——Revolt of Ireland——Intrigues of the dutcheſs of Burgundy——Lambert Simnel invades England——Battle of Stoke. Page 307

CHAP. XXV.

State of foreign affairs——State of Scotland—of Spain—of the Low Countries—of France—of Britanny——French invaſion of Britanny——French embaſſy to England——Diſſimulation of the French court——An inſurrection in the north—ſuppreſſed——King ſends forces into Britanny——Annexation of Britanny to France——A parliament——War with France——Invaſion of France——Peace with France——Perkin Warbec——His impoſture——He is avowed by the dutcheſs of Burgundy—and by many of the Engliſh nobility——Trial and execution of Stanley——A parliament. 332

CHAP. XXVI.

Perkin retires to Scotland——Inſurrection in the weſt——Battle of Blackheath——Truce with Scotland——Perkin taken priſoner——Perkin executed——The earl of Warwic executed——Marriage of prince Arthur with Catherine of Arragon——His death——Marriage of the princeſs Margaret with the king of Scotland——Oppreſſions of the people——A parliament——Arrival of the king

king of Caſtile——Intrigues of the earl of Suffolk——Sickneſs of the king——His death—and character——His laws. Page 370

CHAP. XXVII.

HENRY VIII.

Popularity of the new king——His miniſters——Puniſhment of Empſon and Dudley——King's marriage——Foreign affairs——Julius II.——League of Cambray——War with France——Expedition to Fontarabia——Deceit of Ferdinand——Return of the Engliſh——Leo X.——A parliament——War with Scotland——Wolſey miniſter——His character——Invaſion of France——Battle of Guinegate——Battle of Flouden——Peace with France. 408

THE

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THE

HISTORY

OF

ENGLAND.

CHAP. XVII.

RICHARD II.

Government during the minority——Insurrection of the common people——Discontents of the barons——Civil commotions——Expulsion or execution of the king's ministers——Cabals of the duke of Gloucester——Murder of the duke of Gloucester——Banishment of Henry duke of Hereford——Return of Henry——General insurrection——Deposition of the king——His murders——His character——Miscellaneous transactions during this reign.

THE parliament which was summoned soon after the king's accession, was both elected and assembled in tranquillity; and the great change, from a sovereign of consummate wisdom and experience to a boy of eleven years of age, was not immediately felt by the people. The habits of order and obedience which the barons had been taught during

CHAP. XVII.

1377. Government during the minority.

CHAP. XVII. 1377. during the long reign of Edward, ſtill influenced them; and the authority of the king's three uncles, the dukes of Lancaſter, York, and Gloceſter, ſufficed to repreſs for a time the turbulent ſpirit to which that order, in a weak reign, was ſo often ſubject. The dangerous ambition too of theſe princes themſelves was checked by the plain and undeniable title of Richard, by the declaration of it made in parliament, and by the affectionate regard which the people bore to the memory of his father, and which was naturally transferred to the young ſovereign upon the throne. The different characters alſo of theſe three princes rendered them a counterpoiſe to each other; and it was natural to expect, that any dangerous deſigns which might be formed by one brother, would meet with oppoſition from the others. Lancaſter, whoſe age and experience, and authority under the late king, gave him the aſcendant among them, though his integrity ſeemed not proof againſt great temptations, was neither of an enterpriſing ſpirit, nor of a popular and engaging temper. York was indolent, unactive, and of ſlender capacity. Gloceſter was turbulent, bold, and popular; but being the youngeſt of the family, was reſtrained by the power and authority of his elder brothers. There appeared, therefore, no circumſtance in the domeſtic ſituation of England which might endanger the public peace, or give any immediate apprehenſions to the lovers of their country.

But as Edward, though he had fixed the ſucceſſion to the crown, had taken no care to eſtabliſh a plan of government during the minority of his grandſon, it behoved the parliament to ſupply this defect: And the houſe of commons diſtinguiſhed themſelves by taking the lead on the occaſion. This houſe, which had been riſing to conſideration during the whole courſe of the late reign, naturally received an acceſſion of power during the minority; and as it was now becoming a ſcene of buſineſs, the members

members chose, for the first time, a speaker, who might preserve order in their debates, and maintain those forms which are requisite in all numerous assemblies. Peter de la Mare was the man pitched on; the same person that had been imprisoned, and detained in custody by the late king, for his freedom of speech, in attacking the mistress and the ministers of that prince. But though this election discovered a spirit of liberty in the commons, and was followed by farther attacks both on these ministers and on Alice Pierce [a], they were still too sensible of their great inferiority, to assume at first any immediate share in the administration of government, or the care of the king's person. They were content to apply by petition to the lords for that purpose, and desire them, both to appoint a council of nine, who might direct the public business, and to chuse men of virtuous life and conversation, who might inspect the conduct and education of the young prince. The lords complied with the first part of this request, and elected the bishops of London, Carlisle, and Salisbury, the earls of Marche and Stafford, Sir Richard de Stafford, Sir Henry le Scrope, Sir John Devereux, and Sir Hugh Segrave, to whom they gave authority, for a year, to conduct the ordinary course of business [b]. But as to the regulation of the king's household, they declined interposing in an office, which, they said, both was invidious in itself, and might prove disagreeable to his majesty.

CHAP. XVII. 1377.

The commons, as they acquired more courage, ventured to proceed a step farther in their applications. They presented a petition, in which they prayed the king to check the prevailing custom among the barons, of forming illegal confederacies, and supporting each other, as well as men of inferior rank, in the violations of law and justice. They received from the throne a general and an obliging

[a] Walsing. p. 150. [b] Rymer, vol. vii. p. 161.

CHAP. XVII. 1377.

anſwer to this petition: But another part of their application, that all the great officers ſhould, during the king's minority, be appointed by parliament, which ſeemed to require the concurrence of the commons, as well as that of the upper houſe, in the nomination, was not complied with: The lords alone aſſumed the power of appointing theſe officers: The commons tacitly acquieſced in the choice; and thought, that, for the preſent, they themſelves had proceeded a ſufficient length, if they but advanced their pretenſions, though rejected, of interpoſing in theſe more important matters of ſtate.

On this foot then the government ſtood. The adminiſtration was conducted entirely in the king's name: No regency was expreſsly appointed: The nine counſellors and the great officers named by the peers, did their duty, each in his reſpective department: And the whole ſyſtem was for ſome years kept together by the ſecret authority of the king's uncles, eſpecially of the duke of Lancaſter, who was in reality the regent.

The parliament was diſſolved, after the commons had repreſented the neceſſity of their being reaſſembled once every year, as appointed by law; and after having elected two citizens as their treaſurers, to receive and diſburſe the produce of two fifteenths and tenths, which they had voted to the crown. In the other parliaments called during the minority, the commons ſtill diſcover a ſtrong ſpirit of freedom, and a ſenſe of their own authority, which, without breeding any diſturbance, tended to ſecure their independence, and that of the people [c].

Edward had left his grandſon involved in many dangerous wars. The pretenſions of the duke of Lancaſter to the crown of Caſtile made that kingdom ſtill perſevere in hoſtilities againſt England. Scotland, whoſe throne was now filled by Robert

[c] See note [A] at the end of the volume.

Stuart,

Stuart, nephew to David Bruce, and the first prince of that family, maintained such close connections with France, that war with one crown almost inevitably produced hostilities with the other. The French monarch, whose prudent conduct had acquired him the firname of *wise*, as he had already baffled all the experience and valour of the two Edwards, was likely to prove a dangerous enemy to a minor king: But his genius, which was not naturally enterprising, led him not, at present, to give any disturbance to his neighbours; and he laboured, besides, under many difficulties at home, which it was necessary for him to surmount before he could think of making conquests in a foreign country. England was master of Calais, Bourdeaux, and Bayonne; had lately acquired possession of Cherbourg from the cession of the king of Navarre, and of Brest from that of the duke of Britanny [d]; and having thus an easy entrance into France from every quarter, was able, even in its present situation, to give disturbance to his government. Before Charles could remove the English from these important posts, he died in the flower of his age, and left his kingdom to a minor son, who bore the name of Charles VI. CHAP. XVII. 1377.

MEANWHILE the war with France was carried on in a manner somewhat languid, and produced no enterprise of great lustre or renown. Sir Hugh Calverly, governor of Calais, making an inroad into Picardy with a detachment of the garrison, set fire to Boulogne [e]. The duke of Lancaster conducted an army into Britanny, but returned without being able to perform any thing memorable. In a subsequent year, the duke of Gloucester marched out of Calais with a body of 2000 cavalry, and 8000 infantry; and scrupled not, with his small army, to enter into the heart of France, and to con- 1378. 1380.

[d] Rymer, vol. vii. p. 190. [e] Walsing. p. 209.

CHAP. XVII.

tinue his ravages through Picardy, Champaigne, the Brie, the Beauſſe, the Gatinois, the Orleanois,

1380. till he reached his allies in the province of Britanny[f]. The duke of Burgundy, at the head of a more conſiderable army, came within ſight of him; but the French were ſo overawed by the former ſucceſſes of the Engliſh, that no ſuperiority of numbers could tempt them to venture a pitched battle with the troops of that nation. As the duke of Britanny, ſoon after the arrival of theſe ſuccours, formed an accommodation with the court of France, this enterpriſe alſo proved in the iſſue unſucceſsful, and made no durable impreſſion upon the enemy.

The expences of theſe armaments, and the uſual want of œconomy attending a minority, much exhauſted the Engliſh treaſury, and obliged the parliament, beſides making ſome alterations in the council, to impoſe a new and unuſual tax of three groats, on every perſon, male and female, above fifteen years of age; and they ordained that, in levying that tax, the opulent ſhould relieve the poor by an equitable compenſation. This impoſition produced a mutiny, which was ſingular in its circumſtances. All hiſtory abounds with examples where the great tyranniſe over the meaner ſort: But here the loweſt populace roſe againſt their rulers, committed the moſt cruel ravages upon them, and took vengeance for all former oppreſſions.

1381. The faint dawn of the arts and of good government in that age had excited the minds of the populace in different ſtates of Europe, to wiſh for a better condition, and to murmur againſt thoſe chains which the laws enacted by the haughty nobility and gentry, had ſo long impoſed upon them. The commotions of the people in Flanders, the mutiny of the peaſants in France, were the natural effects of this growing ſpirit of independence; and

[f] Froiſſard, liv. ii. chap. 50, 51. Walſing. p. 239.

the

the report of these events being brought into England, where personal slavery, as we learn from Froissard [g], was more general than in any other country in Europe, had prepared the minds of the multitude for an insurrection. One John Ball also, a seditious preacher, who affected low popularity, went about the country, and inculcated on his audience the principles of the first origin of mankind from one common stock, their equal right to liberty and to all the goods of nature, the tyranny of artificial distinctions, and the abuses which had arisen from the degradation of the more considerable part of the species, and the aggrandisement of a few insolent rulers [h]. These doctrines, so agreeable to the populace, and so conformable to the ideas of primitive equality which are engraven in the hearts of all men, were greedily received by the multitude; and scattered the sparks of that sedition, which the present tax raised into a conflagration [i]. CHAP. XVII. 1381.

Insurrections of the common people.

THE imposition of three groats a head had been farmed out to tax-gatherers in each county, who levied the money on the people with rigour; and the clause of making the rich ease their poorer neighbours of some share of the burden, being so vague and undeterminate, had, doubtless, occasioned many partialities, and made the people more sensible of the unequal lot which fortune had assigned them in the distribution of her favours. The first disorder was raised by a blacksmith in a village of Essex. The tax-gatherers came to this man's shop while he was at work; and they demanded payment for his daughter, whom he asserted to be below the age assigned by the statute. One of these fellows

[g] Liv. ii. chap. 74. [h] Froissard, liv. ii. chap. 74. Walsingham, p. 275.

[i] There were two verses at that time in the mouths of all the common people, which, in spite of prejudice, one cannot but regard with some degree of approbation.

When Adam delv'd and Eve span,
Where was then the gentleman?

CHAP. XVII. 1381.

offered to produce a very indecent proof to the contrary, and at the same time laid hold of the maid: Which the father resenting, immediately knocked out the ruffian's brains with his hammer. The bystanders applauded the action, and exclaimed, that it was full time for the people to take vengeance on their tyrants, and to vindicate their native liberty. They immediately flew to arms: The whole neighbourhood joined in the sedition: The flame spread in an instant over the county: It soon propagated itself into that of Kent, of Hertford, Surry, Sussex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridge, and Lincoln. Before the government had the least warning of the danger, the disorder had grown beyond control or opposition: The populace had shaken off all regard to their former masters; and being headed by the most audacious and criminal of their associates, who assumed the feigned names of Wat Tyler, Jack Straw, Hob Carter, and Tom Miller, by which they were fond of denoting their mean origin, they committed every where the most outrageous violence on such of the gentry or nobility as had the misfortune to fall into their hands.

12th June.

THE mutinous populace, amounting to a hundred thousand men, assembled on Blackheath under their leaders Tyler and Straw; and as the princess of Wales, the king's mother, returning from a pilgrimage to Canterbury, passed through the midst of them, they insulted her attendants; and some of the most insolent among them, to show their purpose of levelling all mankind, forced kisses from her; but they allowed her to continue her journey, without attempting any farther injury[1]. They sent a message to the king, who had taken shelter in the Tower; and they desired a conference with him. Richard sailed down the river in a barge for that purpose; but on his approaching the shore, he saw such symptoms

[1] Froissard, liv. ii. chap. 74.

of tumult and insolence, that he put back and returned to that fortress [m]. The seditious peasants, meanwhile, favoured by the populace of London, had broken into the city; had burned the duke of Lancaster's palace of the Savoy; cut off the heads of all the gentlemen whom they laid hold of; expressed a particular animosity against the lawyers and attornies; and pillaged the warehouses of the rich merchants [n]. A great body of them quartered themselves at Mile-end; and the king, finding no defence in the Tower, which was weakly garrisoned, and ill supplied with provisions, was obliged to go out to them, and ask their demands. They required a general pardon, the abolition of slavery, freedom of commerce in market-towns without toll or impost, and a fixed rent on lands, instead of the services due by villenage. These requests, which, though extremely reasonable in themselves, the nation was not sufficiently prepared to receive, and which it was dangerous to have extorted by violence, were, however, complied with; charters to that purpose were granted them; and this body immediately dispersed, and returned to their several homes [o]. CHAP. XVII. 1381.

During this transaction, another body of the rebels had broken into the Tower; had murdered Simon Sudbury, the primate and chancellor, with Sir Robert Hales, the treasurer, and some other persons of distinction; and continued their ravages in the city [p]. The king, passing along Smithfield, very slenderly guarded, met with Wat Tyler, at the head of these rioters, and entered into a conference with him. Tyler, having ordered his companions to retire till he should give them a signal, after which they were to murder all the company except the king himself, whom they were to detain

[m] Froissard, liv. ii. chap. 75. Walsingham, p. 248, 249.
[n] Ibid. chap. 76. Walsingham, p. 250, 251.
[o] Froissard, liv. ii. chap. 77.

prisoner,

CHAP. XVII. 1381.

priſoner, feared not to come into the midſt of the royal retinue. He there behaved himſelf in ſuch a manner, that Walworth, the mayor of London, not able to bear his inſolence, drew his ſword, and ſtruck him ſo violent a blow as brought him to the ground, where he was inſtantly diſpatched by others of the king's attendants. The mutineers, ſeeing their leader fall, prepared themſelves for revenge; and this whole company, with the king himſelf, had undoubtedly periſhed on the ſpot, had it not been for an extraordinary preſence of mind which Richard diſcovered on the occaſion. He ordered his company to ſtop; he advanced alone towards the enraged multitude; and accoſting them with an affable and intrepid countenance, he aſked them, "What is the meaning of this diſorder, my good "people? Are ye angry that ye have loſt your "leader? I am your king: I will be your leader." The populace, overawed by his preſence, implicitly followed him: He led them into the fields, to prevent any diſorder which might have ariſen by their continuing in the city: Being there joined by Sir Robert Knolles, and a body of well-armed veteran ſoldiers, who had been ſecretly drawn together, he ſtrictly prohibited that officer from falling on the rioters, and committing an undiſtinguiſhed ſlaughter upon them; and he peaceably diſmiſſed them with the ſame charters which had been granted to their fellows [q]. Soon after, the nobility and gentry, hearing of the king's danger, in which they were all involved, flocked to London with their adherents and retainers; and Richard took the field at the head of an army 40,000 ſtrong [r]. It then behoved all the rebels to ſubmit: The charters of enfranchiſement and pardon were revoked by parliament; the low people were reduced to the ſame ſlaviſh condition as before; and ſeveral of the ringleaders

[q] Froiſſard, vol. ii. chap. 77. Walſingham, p. 252. Knyghton, p. 2637.

[r] Walſingham, p. 267.

were severely punished for the late disorders. Some were even executed without process or form of law[s]. It was pretended, that the intentions of the mutineers had been to seize the king's person, to carry him through England at their head, to murder all the nobility, gentry, and lawyers, and even all the bishops and priests, except the mendicant friars; to dispatch afterwards the king himself; and having thus reduced all to a level, to order the kingdom at their pleasure[t]. It is not impossible, but many of them, in the delirium of their first success, might have formed such projects: But of all the evils incident to human society, the insurrections of the populace, when not raised and supported by persons of higher quality, are the least to be dreaded: The mischiefs consequent to an abolition of all rank and distinction become so great, that they are immediately felt, and soon bring affairs back to their former order and arrangement. CHAP. XVII. 1381.

A YOUTH of sixteen (which was at this time the king's age), who had discovered so much courage, presence of mind, and address, and had so dextrously eluded the violence of this tumult, raised great expectations in the nation; and it was natural to hope, that he would, in the course of his life, equal the glories which had so uniformly attended his father and his grandfather in all their undertakings. But in proportion as Richard advanced in years, these hopes vanished; and his want of capacity, at least of solid judgment, appeared in every enterprise which he attempted. The Scots, sensible of their own deficiency in cavalry, had applied to the regency of Charles VI.; and John de Vienne, admiral of France, had been sent over with a body of 1500 men at arms, to support them in their incursions against the English. The danger was now deemed by the king's uncles somewhat serious; and 1385.

[s] 5 Rich. II. cap. ult. as quoted in the Observations on ancient Statutes, p. 262. [t] Walsingham, p. 265.

a nu-

CHAP. XVII. 1385.

a numerous army of 60,000 men was levied; and they marched into Scotland, with Richard himſelf at their head. The Scots did not pretend to make reſiſtance againſt ſo great a force: They abandoned without ſcruple their country to be pillaged and deſtroyed by the enemy: And when de Vienne expreſſed his ſurpriſe at this plan of operations, they told him, that all their cattle was driven into the foreſts and faſtneſſes; that their houſes and other goods were of ſmall value; and that they well knew how to compenſate any loſſes which they might ſuſtain in that reſpect, by making an incurſion into England. Accordingly, when Richard entered Scotland by Berwic and the eaſt coaſt, the Scots, to the number of 30,000 men, attended by the French, entered the borders of England by the weſt, and carrying their ravages through Cumberland, Weſtmoreland, and Lancaſhire, collected a rich booty, and then returned in tranquillity to their own country. Richard mean while advanced towards Edinburgh, and deſtroyed in his way all the towns and villages on each ſide of him: He reduced that city to aſhes: He treated in the ſame manner, Perth, Dundee, and other places in the low countries; but when he was adviſed to march towards the weſt coaſt, to await there the return of the enemy, and to take revenge on them for their devaſtations, his impatience to return to England, and enjoy his uſual pleaſures and amuſements, outweighed every conſideration; and he led back his army, without effecting any thing by all theſe mighty preparations. The Scots, ſoon after, finding the heavy bodies of French cavalry very uſeleſs in that deſultory kind of war to which they confined themſelves, treated their allies ſo ill, that the French returned home, much diſguſted with the country, and with the manners of its inhabitants [u]. And the Engliſh, though they re-

[u] Froiſſard, liv. ii. chap. 149, 150, &c. liv. iii. chap. 52. Walſingham, p. 316, 317.

gretted

gretted the indolence and levity of their king, saw themselves for the future secured against any dangerous invasion from that quarter. CHAP. XVII.

1386. But it was so material an interest of the French court to wrest the sea-port towns from the hands of their enemy, that they resolved to attempt it by some other expedient, and found no means so likely as an invasion of England itself. They collected a great fleet and army at Sluise; for the Flemings were now in alliance with them: All the nobility of France were engaged in this enterprise: The English were kept in alarm: Great preparations were made for the reception of the invaders: And though the dispersion of the French ships by a storm, and the taking of many of them by the English, before the embarkation of the troops, freed the kingdom from the present danger, the king and council were fully sensible that this perilous situation might every moment return upon them [w].

There were two circumstances, chiefly, which engaged the French at this time to think of such attempts. The one was the absence of the duke of Lancaster, who had carried into Spain the flower of the English military force, in prosecution of his vain claim to the crown of Castile; an enterprise in which, after some promising success, he was finally disappointed: The other was, the violent dissensions and disorders which had taken place in the English government.

The subjection in which Richard was held by his uncles, particularly by the duke of Gloucester, a prince of ambition and genius, though it was not unsuitable to his years and slender capacity, was extremely disagreeable to his violent temper; and he soon attempted to shake off the yoke imposed upon him. Robert de Vere, earl of Oxford, a young man of a noble family, of an agreeable figure, but

[w] Froissard, liv. iii. chap. 41. 53. Walsingham, p. 322, 323.

of

CHAP. XVII. 1386.

of diſſolute manners, had acquired an entire aſcendant over him, and governed him with an abſolute authority. The king ſet ſo little bounds to his affection, that he firſt created his favourite marquis of Dublin, a title before unknown in England, then duke of Ireland; and transferred to him by patent, which was confirmed in parliament, the entire ſovereignty for life of that iſland [x]. He gave him in marriage his couſin-german, the daughter of Ingelram de Couci, earl of Bedford; but ſoon after he permitted him to repudiate that lady, though of an unexceptionable character, and to marry a foreigner, a Bohemian, with whom he had become enamoured [y]. Theſe public declarations of attachment turned the attention of the whole court towards the minion: All favours paſſed through his hands: Acceſs to the king could only be obtained by his mediation: And Richard ſeemed to take no pleaſure in royal authority, but ſo far as it enabled him to load with favours and titles and dignities this object of his affections.

Diſcontent of the barons.

THE jealouſy of power immediately produced an animoſity between the minion and his creatures on the one hand, and the princes of the blood and chief nobility on the other; and the uſual complaints againſt the inſolence of favourites were loudly echoed, and greedily received, in every part of the kingdom. Moubray earl of Nottingham, the mareſchal, Fitz-Alan earl of Arundel, Piercy earl of Northumberland, Montacute earl of Saliſbury, Beauchamp earl of Warwic, were all connected with each other, and with the princes, by friendſhip or alliance, and ſtill more by their common antipathy to thoſe who had eclipſed them in the king's favour and confidence. No longer kept in awe by the perſonal character of the prince, they ſcorned to ſubmit to his miniſters; and the method which

[x] Cotton, p. 310, 311. Cox's Hiſt. of Ireland, p. 129. Walſingham, p. 324.

[y] Walſingham, p. 328.

they

they took to redreſs the grievances complained of well ſuited the violence of the age, and proves the deſperate extremities to which every oppoſition was ſure to be inſtantly carried. CHAP. XVII. 1386.

MICHAEL DE LA POLE, the preſent chancellor, and lately created earl of Suffolk, was the ſon of an eminent merchant; but had riſen by his abilities and valour during the wars of Edward III., had acquired the friendſhip of that monarch, and was eſteemed the perſon of greateſt experience and capacity among thoſe who were attached to the duke of Ireland and the king's ſecret council. The duke of Gloceſter, who had the houſe of commons at his devotion, impelled them to exerciſe that power, which they ſeem firſt to have aſſumed againſt lord Latimer during the declining years of the late king; and an impeachment againſt the chancellor was carried up by them to the houſe of peers, which was no leſs at his devotion. The king foreſaw the tempeſt preparing againſt him and his miniſters. After attempting in vain to rouſe the Londoners to his defence, he withdrew from parliament, and retired with his court to Eltham. The parliament ſent a deputation, inviting him to return, and threatening, that, if he perſiſted in abſenting himſelf, they would immediately diſſolve, and leave the nation, though at that time in imminent danger of a French invaſion, without any ſupport or ſupply for its defence. At the ſame time a member was encouraged to call for the record containing the parliamentary depoſition of Edward II.; a plain intimation of the fate which Richard, if he continued refractory, had reaſon to expect from them. The king, finding himſelf unable to reſiſt, was content to ſtipulate, that, except finiſhing the preſent impeachment againſt Suffolk, no attack ſhould be made upon any other of his miniſters; and on that condition he returned to the parliament [z].

[z] See note [B] at the end of the volume.

NOTHING

CHAP. XVII. 1386.

NOTHING can prove more fully the innocence of Suffolk, than the frivolousness of the crimes which his enemies, in the present plenitude of their power, thought proper to object against him [a]. It was alleged, that being chancellor, and obliged by his oath to consult the king's profit, he had purchased lands of the crown below their true value; that he had exchanged with the king a perpetual annuity of 400 marks a year, which he inherited from his father, and which was assigned upon the customs of the port of Hull for lands of an equal income; that having obtained for his son the priory of St. Anthony, which was formerly possessed by a Frenchman, an enemy and a schismatic, and a new prior being at the same time named by the pope, he had refused to admit this person, whose title was not legal, till he made a composition with his son, and agreed to pay him a hundred pounds a year from the income of the benefice; that he had purchased from one Tydeman of Limborch, an old and forfeited annuity of fifty pounds a-year upon the crown, and had engaged the king to admit that bad debt; and that, when created earl of Suffolk, he had obtained a grant of 500 pounds a year, to support the dignity of that title [b]. Even the proof of these articles, frivolous as they are, was found very deficient upon the trial: It appeared that Suffolk, had made no purchase from the crown while he was chancellor, and that all his bargains of that kind were made before he was advanced to that dignity [c]. It is almost needless to add, that he was condemned notwithstanding his defence; and that he was deprived of his office.

[a] Cotton, p. 315. Knyghton, p. 2683.

[b] It is probable that the earl of Suffolk was not rich, nor able to support the dignity without the bounty of the crown: For his father, Michael de la Pole, though a great merchant, had been ruined by lending money to the late king. See Cotton, p. 194. We may remark that the dukes of Gloucester and York, though vastly rich, received at the same time each of them a thousand pounds a year, to support their dignity. Rymer, vol. vii. p. 481. Cotton, p. 310.

[c] Cotton, p. 315.

GLOCESTER

GLOCESTER and his associates observed their stipulation with the king, and attacked no more of his ministers: But they immediately attacked himself and his royal dignity, and framed a commission after the model of those which had been attempted almost in every reign since that of Richard I. and which had always been attended with extreme confusion [d]. By this commission, which was ratified by parliament, a council of fourteen persons was appointed, all of Gloceſter's faction, except Nevil archbishop of York: The sovereign power was transferred to these men for a twelvemonth: The king, who had now reached the twenty-first year of his age, was in reality dethroned: The aristocracy was rendered supreme: And though the term of the commission was limited, it was easy to foresee that the intentions of the party were to render it perpetual, and that power would with great difficulty be wrested from those grasping hands to which it was once committed. Richard, however, was obliged to submit: He signed the commission, which violence had extorted from him; he took an oath never to infringe it; and though at the end of the session he *publicly* entered a protest, that the prerogatives of the crown, notwithstanding his late concession, should still be deemed entire and unimpaired [e], the new commissioners, without regarding this declaration, proceeded to the exercise of their authority. CHAP. XVII. 1386.

THE king, thus dispossessed of royal power, was soon sensible of the contempt into which he was fallen. His favourites and ministers, who were as yet allowed to remain about his person, failed not to aggravate the injury, which, without any demerit on his part, had been offered to him. And his eager temper was of itself sufficiently inclined to seek the means, both of recovering his authority, and of revenging himself on those who had invaded it. As the house of 1387. Civil commotions.

[d] Knyghton, p. 2686. Statutes at Large, 10 Rich. II. chap. i.
[e] Cotton, p. 318.

CHAP. XVII. 1387.

commons appeared now of weight in the conſtitution, he ſecretly tried ſome expedients for procuring a favourable election: He founded ſome of the ſheriffs, who being at that time both the returning officers and magiſtrates of great power in the counties, had naturally conſiderable influence in elections [f]. But, as moſt of them had been appointed by his uncles, either during his minority, or during the courſe of the preſent commiſſion, he found them, in general, averſe to his enterpriſe. The ſentiments and inclinations of the judges were more favourable to him. He met, at Nottingham, ſir Robert Treſilian, chief juſtice of the King's Bench, ſir Robert Belknappe, chief juſtice of the Common Pleas, ſir John Cary, chief baron of the Exchequer, Holt, Fulthorpe, and Bourg, inferior juſtices, and Lockton, ſerjeant at law; and he propoſed to them ſome queries; which theſe lawyers, either from the influence of his authority, or of reaſon, made no ſcruple of anſwering in the way he deſired. They declared that the late commiſſion was derogatory to the royalty and prerogative of the king; that thoſe who procured it, or adviſed the king to conſent to it, were puniſhable with death; that thoſe who neceſſitated and compelled him were guilty of treaſon; that thoſe were equally criminal who ſhould perſevere in maintaining it; that the king has the right of diſſolving parliaments at pleaſure; that the parliament, while it ſits, muſt firſt proceed upon the king's buſineſs; and that this aſſembly cannot, without his conſent, impeach any of his miniſters and judges [g]. Even according to our preſent ſtrict maxims with regard to law and the royal prerogative, all theſe determinations, except the two laſt, appear juſtifiable: And as the great privileges of the commons, particularly that of impeachment, were hitherto new,

[f] In the preamble to 5 Henry IV. cap. vii. it is implied, that the ſheriffs in a manner appointed the members of the houſe of commons not only in this parliament, but in many others.

[g] Knyghton, p. 2694. Ypod. Neuſt. p. 541.

and

and supported by few precedents, there want not plausible reasons to justify these opinions of the judges [h]. They signed therefore their answer to the king's queries before the archbishops of York and Dublin, the bishops of Durham, Chichester, and Bangor, the duke of Ireland, the earl of Suffolk, and two other counsellors of inferior quality. CHAP. XVII. 1387.

THE duke of Gloucester and his adherents soon got intelligence of this secret consultation, and were naturally very much alarmed at it. They saw the king's intentions; and they determined to prevent the execution of them. As soon as he came to London, which they knew was well disposed to their party, they secretly assembled their forces, and appeared in arms at Haringay-park, near Highgate, with a power which Richard and his ministers were not able to resist. They sent him a message by the archbishop of Canterbury, and the lords Lovel, Cobham, and Devereux, and demanded that the persons who had seduced him by their pernicious counsel, and were traitors both to him and to the kingdom, should be delivered up to them. A few days after they appeared in his presence, armed and attended with armed followers; and they accused, by name, the archbishop

[h] The parliament, in 1341, exacted of Edward III. that, on the third day of every session, the king should resume all the great offices; and that the ministers should then answer to any accusation that should be brought against them: Which plainly implies that, while ministers, they could not be accused or impeached in parliament. Henry IV. told the commons, that the usage of parliament required them first to go through the king's business in granting supplies; which order the king intended not to alter. Parl. Hist. vol. ii. p. 65. Upon the whole, it must be allowed, that, according to ancient practice and principles, there are, at least, plausible grounds for all these opinions of the judges. It must be remarked, that this affirmation of Henry IV. was given deliberately, after consulting the house of peers, who were much better acquainted with the usage of parliament than the ignorant commons. And it has the greater authority, because Henry IV. had made this very principle a considerable article of charge against his predecessor; and that a very few years before. So ill grounded were most of the imputations thrown on the unhappy Richard!

CHAP. XVII.

1387. of York, the duke of Ireland, the earl of Suffolk, ſir Robert Treſilian, and ſir Nicholas Brembre, as public and dangerous enemies to the ſtate. They threw down their gauntlets before the king, and fiercely offered to maintain the truth of their charge by duel. The perſons accuſed, and all the other obnoxious miniſters, had withdrawn or had concealed themſelves.

THE duke of Ireland fled to Cheſhire, and levied ſome forces, with which he advanced to relieve the king from the violence of the nobles. Gloceſter encountered him in Oxfordſhire with much ſuperior forces; routed him, diſperſed his followers, and obliged him to fly into the Low-Countries, where he died in exile a few years after. The lords then appeared at London with an army of forty thouſand men; and having obliged the king to ſummon a parliament, which was entirely at their devotion, they had full power, by obſerving a few legal forms, to take vengeance on all their enemies. Five great peers, men whoſe combined power was able at any time to ſhake the throne, the duke of Gloceſter, the king's uncle; the earl of Derby, ſon of the duke of Lancaſter; the earl of Arundel; the earl of Warwic, and the earl of Nottingham, mareſchal of England, entered before the parliament an accuſation or appeal, as it was called, againſt the five counſellors whom they had already accuſed before the king. The parliament, who ought to have been judges, were not aſhamed to impoſe an oath on all their members, by which they bound themſelves to live and die with the lords appellants, and to defend them againſt all oppoſition with their lives and fortunes [h].

1388. 3d Feb.

Expulſion or execution of the king's miniſters.

THE other proceedings were well ſuited to the violence and iniquity of the times. A charge, conſiſting of thirty-nine articles, was delivered in by the appellants; and, as none of the accuſed counſellors except ſir Nicholas Brembre was in cuſtody, the reſt were cited to appear; and, upon their abſenting

[h] Cotton, p 322.

themſelves,

themſelves, the houſe of peers, after a very ſhort interval, without hearing a witneſs, without examining a fact, or deliberating on one point of law, declared them guilty of high treaſon. Sir Nicholas Brembre, who was produced in court, had the appearance, and but the appearance, of a trial: The peers, though they were not by law his proper judges, pronounced, in a very ſummary manner, ſentence of death upon him; and he was executed, together with ſir Robert Treſilian, who had been diſcovered and taken in the interval. CHAP. XVII. 1388.

It would be tedious to recite the whole charge delivered in againſt the five counſellors; which is to be met with in ſeveral collections[i]. It is ſufficient to obſerve, in general, that if we reaſon upon the ſuppoſition, which is the true one, that the royal prerogative was invaded by the commiſſion extorted by the duke of Gloceſter and his aſſociates, and that the king's perſon was afterwards detained in cuſtody by rebels, many of the articles will appear, not only to imply no crime in the duke of Ireland and the miniſters, but to aſcribe to them actions which were laudable, and which they were bound by their allegiance to perform. The few articles impeaching the conduct of theſe miniſters before that commiſſion, which ſubverted the conſtitution, and annihilated all juſtice and legal authority, are vague and general; ſuch as their engroſſing the king's favour, keeping his barons at a diſtance from him, obtaining unreaſonable grants for themſelves or their creatures, and diſſipating the public treaſure by uſeleſs expences. No violence is objected to them; no particular illegal act*; no breach of any ſtatute; and their adminiſtration may therefore be concluded to have been ſo far innocent and inoffenſive. All the diſorders indeed ſeem to have proceeded, not

[i] Knyghton, p. 2715. Tyrrel, vol. iii. part 2. p. 919. from the records. Parl. Hiſt. vol. i. p. 414.

* See note [C] at the end of the volume.

CHAP. XVII. 1388.

from any violation of the laws, or any miniſterial tyranny, but merely from a rivalſhip of power, which the duke of Gloceſter and the great nobility, agreeably to the genius of the times, carried to the utmoſt extremity againſt their opponents, without any regard to reaſon, juſtice, or humanity.

But theſe were not the only deeds of violence committed during the triumph of the party. All the other judges, who had ſigned the extrajudicial opinions at Nottingham, were condemned to death, and were, as a grace or favour, baniſhed to Ireland; though they pleaded the fear of their lives, and the menaces of the king's miniſters, as their excuſe. Lord Beauchamp of Holt, ſir James Berners, and John Saliſbury, were alſo tried and condemned for high treaſon; merely becauſe they had attempted to defeat the late commiſſion: But the life of the latter was ſpared. The fate of ſir Simon Burley was more ſevere: This gentleman was much beloved for his perſonal merit, had diſtinguiſhed himſelf by many honourable actions [k], was created knight of the garter, and had been appointed governor to Richard, by the choice of the late king and of the Black Prince: He had attended his maſter from the earlieſt infancy of that prince, and had ever remained extremely attached to him: Yet all theſe conſiderations could not ſave him from falling a victim to Gloceſter's vengeance. This execution, more than all the others, made a deep impreſſion on the mind of Richard: His queen too (for he was already married to the ſiſter of the emperor Winceſlaus, king of Bohemia) intereſted herſelf in behalf of Burley: She remained three hours on her knees before the duke of Gloceſter, pleading for that gentleman's

[k] At leaſt this is the character given of him by Froiſſard, liv. ii. who knew him perſonally: Walſingham, p. 334. gives a very different character of him: but he is a writer ſomewhat paſſionate and partial; and the choice made of this gentleman by Edward III. and the Black Prince for the education of Richard, makes the character given him by Froiſſard much more probable.

life;

life; but though she was become extremely popular by her amiable qualities, which had acquired her the appellation of *the good queen Ann*, her petition was sternly rejected by the inexorable tyrant. CHAP. XVII. 1388.

The parliament concluded this violent scene, by a declaration that none of the articles, decided on these trials to be treason, should ever afterwards be drawn into precedent by the judges, who were still to consider the statute of the twenty-fifth of Edward as the rule of their decisions. The house of lords seem not, at that time, to have known or acknowledged the principle, that they themselves were bound, in their judicial capacity, to follow the rules which they, in conjunction with the king and commons, had established in their legislative *. It was also enacted, that every one should swear to the perpetual maintenance and support of the forfeitures and attainders, and of all the other acts passed during this parliament. The archbishop of Canterbury added the penalty of excommunication, as a farther security to these violent transactions.

It might naturally be expected, that the king, being reduced to such slavery by the combination of the princes and chief nobility, and having appeared so unable to defend his servants from the cruel effects of their resentment, would long remain in subjection to them; and never would recover the royal power, without the most violent struggles and convulsions: But the event proved contrary. In less than a twelvemonth, Richard, who was in his twenty-third year, declared in council, that, as he had now attained the full age which entitled him to govern by his own authority his kingdom and household, he resolved to exercise his right of sovereignty; and when no one ventured to contradict so reasonable an intention, he deprived Fitz-Alan, archbishop of Canterbury, of the dignity of chancellor, and bestowed that high 1389.

* See note [D] at the end of the volume.

CHAP. XVII. 1389.

office on William of Wickham, bishop of Winchester; the bishop of Hereford was displaced from the office of treasurer, the earl of Arundel from that of admiral; even the duke of Gloucester and the earl of Warwic were removed for a time from the council: And no opposition was made to these great changes. The history of this reign is imperfect, and little to be depended on; except where it is supported by public records: And it is not easy for us to assign the reason of this unexpected event. Perhaps some secret animosities, naturally to be expected in that situation, had creeped in among the great men, and had enabled the king to recover his authority. Perhaps the violence of their former proceedings had lost them the affections of the people, who soon repent of any cruel extremities to which they are carried by their leaders. However this may be, Richard exercised with moderation the authority which he had resumed. He seemed to be entirely reconciled to his uncles[l] and the other great men, of whom he had so much reason to complain: He never attempted to recal from banishment the duke of Ireland, whom he found so obnoxious to them: He confirmed, by proclamation, the general pardon which the parliament had passed for all offences: And he courted the affections of the people, by voluntarily remitting some subsidies which had been granted him; a remarkable and almost singular instance of such generosity.

After this composure of domestic differences, and this restoration of the government to its natural state, there passes an interval of eight years, which affords not many remarkable events. The duke of Lancaster returned from Spain; having resigned to his rival all pretensions to the crown of Castile upon payment of a large sum of money[m], and having married his daughter, Philippa, to the king of Portugal,

[l] Dugdale, vol. ii. p. 170.

[m] Knyghton, p. 2677. Walsingham, p. 342.

tugal. The authority of this prince ſerved to counterbalance that of the duke of Gloceſter, and ſecured the power of Richard, who paid great court to his eldeſt uncle, by whom he had never been offended, and whom he found more moderate in his temper than the younger. He made a ceſſion to him for life of the dutchy of Guienne [n], which the inclinations and changeable humour of the Gaſcons had reſtored to the Engliſh government; but as they remonſtrated loudly againſt this deed, it was finally, with the duke's conſent, revoked by Richard [o]. There happened an incident, which produced a diſſenſion between Lancaſter and his two brothers. After the death of the Spaniſh princeſs, he eſpouſed Catherine Swineford, daughter of a private knight of Hainault, by whoſe alliance York and Gloceſter thought the dignity of their family much injured: But the king gratified his uncle, by paſſing in parliament a charter of legitimation to the children whom that lady had born him before marriage, and by creating the eldeſt earl of Somerſet [p]. CHAP. XVII. 1389.

THE wars, meanwhile, which Richard had inherited with his crown, ſtill continued; though interrupted by frequent truces, according to the practice of that age, and conducted with little vigour, by reaſon of the weakneſs of all parties. The French war was ſcarcely heard of; the tranquillity of the northern borders was only interrupted by one inroad of the Scots, which proceeded more from a rivalſhip between the two martial families of Piercy and Douglas, than from any national quarrel: A fierce battle or ſkirmiſh was fought at Otterborne [q], in which young Piercy, ſirnamed *Hotſpur*, from his impetuous valour, was taken priſoner, and Douglas ſlain; and the victory remained undecided [r].

[n] Rymer, vol. vii. p. 659. [o] Ibid. p. 687. [p] Cotton, p. 365. Walſingham, p. 352. [q] 15th Auguſt, 1388.
[r] Froiſſard, liv. iii. chap. 124, 125, 126. Walſingham, p. 355.

CHAP. XVII.

Some insurrections of the Irish obliged the king to make an expedition into that country, which he reduced to obedience; and he recovered, in some degree, by this enterprise, his character of courage, which had suffered a little by the inactivity of his reign. At last, the English and French courts began to think in earnest of a lasting peace; but found it so difficult to adjust their opposite pretensions, that they were content to establish a truce of twenty-five years [s]: Brest and Cherbourg were restored, the former to the duke of Britanny, the latter to the king of Navarre: Both parties were left in possession of all the other places which they held at the time of concluding the truce: And to render the amity between the two crowns more durable, Richard, who was now a widower, was affianced to Isabella, the daughter of Charles [t]. This princess was only seven years of age; but the king agreed to so unequal a match, chiefly that he might fortify himself by this alliance, against the enterprises of his uncles, and the incurable turbulence as well as inconstancy of his barons.

1389.

1396.

The administration of the king, though it was not, in this interval, sullied by any unpopular act, except the seizing of the charter of London [u], which was soon after restored, tended not much to corroborate his authority; and his personal character brought him into contempt, even while his public government appeared, in a good measure, unexceptionable. Indolent, profuse, addicted to low pleasures; he spent his whole time in feasting and jollity, and dissipated, in idle show, or in bounties to favourites of no reputation, that revenue which the people expected to see him employ in enterprises directed to public honour and advantage. He forgot his rank by admitting all men to his familiarity; and he was not sensible, that their acquaint-

[s] Rymer, vol. vii. p. 820. [t] Ibid. p. 811.
[u] Ibid. p. 727. Walsingham, p. 347.

ance

ance with the qualities of his mind was not able to impreſs them with the reſpect which he neglected to preſerve from his birth and ſtation. The earls of Kent and Huntingdon, his half brothers, were his chief confidents and favourites, and though he never devoted himſelf to them with ſo profuſe an affection as that with which he had formerly been attached to the duke of Ireland, it was eaſy for men to ſee, that every grace paſſed through their hands, and that the king had rendered himſelf a mere cypher in the government. The ſmall regard which the public bore to his perſon, diſpoſed them to murmur againſt his adminiſtration, and to receive, with greedy ears, every complaint which the diſcontented or ambitious grandees ſuggeſted to them. CHAP. XVII. 1396.

GLOCESTER ſoon perceived the advantages which this diſſolute conduct gave him; and finding, that both reſentment and jealouſy on the part of his nephew ſtill prevented him from acquiring any aſcendant over that prince, he determined to cultivate his popularity with the nation, and to revenge himſelf on thoſe who eclipſed him in favour and authority. He ſeldom appeared at court or in council: He never declared his opinion but in order to diſapprove of the meaſures embraced by the king and his favourites; and he courted the friendſhip of every man, whom diſappointment or private reſentment had rendered an enemy to the adminiſtration. The long truce with France was unpopular with the Engliſh, who breathed nothing but war againſt that hoſtile nation; and Gloceſter took care to encourage all the vulgar prejudices which prevailed on this ſubject. Forgetting the misfortunes which attended the Engliſh arms during the later years of Edward, he made an invidious compariſon between the glories of that reign and the inactivity of the preſent, and he lamented that Richard ſhould have degenerated ſo much from the heroic virtues by which 1397. Cabals of the duke of Gloceſter.

CHAP. XVII. 1397.

his father and his grandfather were diſtinguiſhed. The military men were inflamed with a deſire of war, when they heard him talk of the ſignal victories formerly obtained, and of the eaſy prey which might be made of French riches by the ſuperior valour of the Engliſh: The populace readily embraced the ſame ſentiments: And all men exclaimed that this prince, whoſe counſels were ſo much neglected, was the true ſupport of Engliſh honour, and alone able to raiſe the nation to its former power and ſplendour. His great abilities, his popular manners, his princely extraction, his immenſe riches, his high office of conſtable [w], all theſe advantages, not a little aſſiſted by his want of court-favour, gave him a mighty authority in the kingdom, and rendered him formidable to Richard and his miniſters.

FROISSARD [x], a contemporary writer and very impartial, but whoſe credit is ſomewhat impaired by his want of exactneſs in material facts, aſcribes to the duke of Gloceſter more deſperate views, and ſuch as were totally incompatible with the government and domeſtic tranquillity of the nation. According to that hiſtorian, he propoſed to his nephew, Roger Mortimer, earl of Marche, whom Richard had declared his ſucceſſor, to give him immediate poſſeſſion of the throne, by the depoſition of a prince ſo unworthy of power and authority: And when Mortimer declined the project, he reſolved to make a partition of the kingdom between himſelf, his two brothers, and the earl of Arundel; and entirely to diſpoſſeſs Richard of the crown. The king, it is ſaid, being informed of theſe deſigns, ſaw that either his own ruin or that of Gloceſter was inevitable; and he reſolved, by a haſty blow, to prevent the execution of ſuch deſtructive projects. This is certain, that Gloceſter, by his own confeſſion, had

[w] Rymer, vol. vii. p. 152. [x] Liv. iv. chap. 86.

often

often affected to ſpeak contemptuouſly of the king's perſon and government; had deliberated concerning the lawfulneſs of throwing off allegiance to him; and had even born part in a ſecret conference, where his depoſition was propoſed, and talked of, and determined[y]: But it is reaſonable to think, that his ſchemes were not ſo far advanced as to make him reſolve on putting them immediately in execution. The danger, probably, was ſtill too diſtant to render a deſperate remedy entirely neceſſary for the ſecurity of government. CHAP. XVII. 1397.

But whatever opinion we may form of the danger ariſing from Gloceſter's conſpiracies, his averſion to the French truce and alliance was public and avowed; and that court, which had now a great influence over the king, puſhed him to provide for his own ſafety, by puniſhing the traiterous deſigns of his uncle. The reſentment againſt his former acts of violence revived; the ſenſe of his refractory and uncompliant behaviour was ſtill recent; and a man, whoſe ambition had once uſurped royal authority, and who had murdered all the faithful ſervants of the king, was thought capable, on a favourable opportunity, of renewing the ſame criminal enterpriſes. The king's precipitate temper admitted of no deliberation: He ordered Gloceſter to be unexpectedly arreſted; to be hurried on board a ſhip which was lying in the river; and to be carried over to Calais, where alone, by reaſon of his numerous partiſans, he could ſafely be detained in cuſtody[z]. The earls of Arundel and Warwic were ſeized at the ſame time: The malcontents, ſo ſud-

[y] Cotton, p. 378. Tyrrel, vol. iii. part 2. p. 972. from the records. Parliamentary Hiſtory, vol. i. p. 473. That this confeſſion was genuine, and obtained without violence, may be entirely depended on. Judge Rickhill, who brought it over from Calais, was tried on that account, and acquitted in the firſt parliament of Henry IV. when Gloceſter's party was prevalent. His acquittal, notwithſtanding his innocence, may even appear marvellous, conſidering the times. See Cotton, p. 393.

[z] Froiſſard, liv. iv. chap. 90. Walſing. p. 354.

denly

CHAP. XVII. 1397. denly deprived of their leaders, were aſtoniſhed and overawed: And the concurrence of the dukes of Lancaſter and York in thoſe meaſures, together with the earls of Derby and Rutland, the eldeſt ſons of theſe princes [a], bereaved them of all poſſibility of reſiſtance.

17th Sept. A PARLIAMENT was immediately ſummoned at Weſtminſter; and the king doubted not to find the peers, and ſtill more the commons, very compliant with his will. This houſe had in a former parliament given him very ſenſible proofs of their attachment *; and the preſent ſuppreſſion of Gloceſter's party made him ſtill more aſſured of a favourable election. As a farther expedient for that purpoſe, he is alſo ſaid to have employed the influence of the ſheriffs; a practice which, though not unuſual, gave umbrage, but which the eſtabliſhed authority of that aſſembly rendered afterwards ſtill more familiar to the nation. Accordingly the parliament paſſed whatever acts the king was pleaſed to dictate to them [b]: They annulled for ever the commiſſion which uſurped upon the royal authority, and they declared it treaſonable to attempt, in any future period, the revival of any ſimilar commiſſion [c]: They abrogated all the acts which attainted the king's miniſters, and which that parliament who paſſed them, and the whole nation, had ſworn inviolably to maintain: And they declared the general pardon then granted to be invalid, as extorted by force, and never ratified by the free conſent of the king. Though Richard, after he reſumed the government, and lay no longer under conſtraint, had voluntarily, by proclamation, confirmed that general indemnity; this circumſtance ſeemed not,

[a] Rymer, vol. viii. p. 7. * See note [E] at the end of the volume.

[b] The nobles brought numerous retainers with them to give them ſecurity, as we are told by Walſingham, p. 354. The king had only a few Cheſhire men for his guard.

[c] Statutes at Large 21 Richard II.

in

in their eyes, to merit any conſideration. Even a particular pardon, granted ſix years after to the earl of Arundel, was annulled by parliament; on pretence that it had been procured by ſurpriſe, and that the king was not then fully appriſed of the degree of guilt incurred by that nobleman. CHAP. XVII. 1397.

THE commons then preferred an impeachment againſt Fitz-Alan, archbiſhop of Canterbury, and brother to Arundel, and accuſed him for his concurrence in procuring the illegal commiſſion, and in attainting the king's miniſters. The primate pleaded guilty; but as he was protected by the eccleſiaſtical privileges, the king was ſatisfied with a ſentence, which baniſhed him the kingdom, and ſequeſtered his temporalities [d]. An appeal or accuſation was preſented againſt the duke of Gloceſter, and the earls of Arundel and Warwic, by the earls of Rutland, Kent, Huntingdon, Somerſet, Saliſbury, and Nottingham, together with the lords Spencer and Scrope, and they were accuſed of the ſame crimes which had been imputed to the archbiſhop, as well as of their appearance againſt the king in a hoſtile manner at Haringay-park. The earl of Arundel, who was brought to the bar, wiſely confined all his defence to the pleading of both the general and particular pardon of the king; but his plea being over-ruled, he was condemned and executed [e]. The earl of Warwic, who was alſo convicted of high treaſon, was, on account of his ſubmiſſive behaviour, pardoned as to his life, but doomed to perpetual baniſhment in the Iſle of Man. No new acts of treaſon were imputed to either of theſe noblemen. The only crimes for which they were condemned, were the old attempts againſt the crown, which ſeemed to be obliterated, both by the diſtance of time and by repeated pardons [f]. The

[d] Cotton, p. 368. Walſing. p. 354. chap. 90.

[e] Ibid. p. 377. Froiſſard. liv. iv. p. 968. from the records.

[f] Tyrrel, vol. iii. part ii.

reaſons

CHAP. XVII. 1397.

reasons of this method of proceeding, it is difficult to conjecture. The recent conspiracies of Gloucester seem certain from his own confession: But, perhaps, the king and ministry had not at that time in their hands any satisfactory proof of their reality; perhaps, it was difficult to convict Arundel and Warwic of any participation in them; perhaps, an inquiry into these conspiracies would have involved in the guilt some of those great noblemen who now concurred with the crown, and whom it was necessary to cover from all imputation; or perhaps the king, according to the genius of the age, was indifferent about maintaining even the appearance of law and equity, and was only solicitous by any means to ensure success in these prosecutions. This point, like many others in ancient history, we are obliged to leave altogether undetermined.

Murder of the duke of Gloucester.

A WARRANT was issued to the earl mareschal, governor of Calais, to bring over the duke of Gloucester, in order to his trial; but the governor returned for answer, that the duke had died suddenly of an apoplexy in that fortress. Nothing could be more suspicious, from the time, than the circumstances of that prince's death: It became immediately the general opinion, that he was murdered by orders from his nephew: In the subsequent reign undoubted proofs were produced in parliament, that he had been suffocated with pillows by his keepers[s]. And it appeared that the king, apprehensive lest the public trial and execution of so popular a prince, and so near a relation, might prove both dangerous and invidious, had taken this base method of gratifying, and, as he fancied, concealing his revenge upon him. Both parties, in their successive triumphs, seem to have had no farther concern than that of retaliating upon their adversaries; and neither of them were aware, that, by imitating, they indirectly justified, as far as it lay in their power, all the illegal violence of the opposite party.

[s] Cotton, p. 399, 400. Dugdale, vol. ii. p. 171.

THE

CHAP. XVII.

1397.

THIS ſeſſion concluded with the creation or advancement of ſeveral peers: The earl of Derby was made duke of Hereford; the earl of Rutland, duke of Albemarle; the earl of Kent, duke of Surrey; the earl of Huntingdon, duke of Exeter; the earl of Nottingham, Duke of Norfolk; the earl of Somerſet, marquis of Dorſet; lord Spencer, earl of Gloceſter; Ralph Nevil, earl of Weſtmoreland; Thomas Piercy, earl of Worceſter; William Scrope, earl of Wiltſhire [h]. The parliament, after a ſeſſion of twelve days, was adjourned to Shrewſbury. The king, before the departure of the members, exacted from them an oath for the perpetual maintenance and eſtabliſhment of all their acts; an oath ſimilar to that which had formerly been required by the duke of Gloceſter and his party, and which had already proved ſo vain and fruitleſs.

1398. 28th jan.

BOTH king and parliament met in the ſame diſpoſitions at Shrewſbury. So anxious was Richard for the ſecurity of theſe acts, that he obliged the lords and commons to ſwear anew to them on the croſs of Canterbury [i]; and he ſoon after procured a bull from the pope, by which they were, as he imagined, perpetually ſecured and eſtabliſhed [k]. The parliament, on the other hand, conferred on him *for life* the duties on wool, wool-fells, and leather, and granted him, beſides, a ſubſidy of one tenth and a half, and one fifteenth and a half. They alſo reverſed the attainder of Treſilian and the other judges, and, with the approbation of the preſent judges, declared the anſwers, for which theſe magiſtrates had been impeached, to be juſt and legal [l]: And they carried ſo far their retroſpect, as to reverſe, on the petition of lord Spencer, earl of Gloceſter, the attainder pronounced againſt the two Spencers in the reign of Edward II. [m] The ancient hiſtory of England is nothing but a catalogue of re-

[h] Cotton, p. 370, 371.
[i] Ibid. p. 371.
[k] Walſing. p. 355.
[l] Statutes at Large, 21 Rich. II.
[m] Cotton, p. 372.

CHAP. XVII. 1398.

verſals: Every thing is in fluctuation and movement: One faction is continually undoing what was eſtabliſhed by another: And the multiplied oaths, which each party exacted for the ſecurity of the preſent acts, betray a perpetual conſciouſneſs of their inſtability.

THE parliament, before they were diſſolved, elected a committee of twelve lords and ſix commoners [n], whom they inveſted with the whole power both of lords and commons, and endowed with full authority to finiſh all buſineſs which had been laid before the houſes, and which they had not had leiſure to bring to a concluſion [o]. This was an unuſual conceſſion; and though it was limited in the object, might, either immediately or as a precedent, have proved dangerous to the conſtitution: But the cauſe of that extraordinary meaſure was an event ſingular and unexpected, which engaged the attention of the parliament.

AFTER the deſtruction of the duke of Gloceſter and the heads of that party, a miſunderſtanding broke out among thoſe noblemen who had joined in the proſecution; and the king wanted either authority ſufficient to appeaſe it, or foreſight to prevent it. The duke of Hereford appeared in parliament, and accuſed the duke of Norfolk of having ſpoken to him, in private, many ſlanderous words of the king, and of having imputed to that prince an intention of ſubverting and deſtroying many of his principal nobility [p]. Norfolk denied the charge, gave Hereford the lie,

[n] The names of the commiſſioners were, the dukes of Lancaſter, York, Albemarle, Surrey, and Exeter; the Marquis of Dorſet; the earls of March, Saliſbury, Northumberland, Gloceſter, Wincheſter and Wiltſhire; John Buſſy, Henry Green, John Ruſſel, Robert Teyne, Henry Chelmeſwicke, and John Golofre. It is to be remarked, that the duke of Lancaſter always concurred with the reſt in all their proceedings, even in the baniſhment of his ſon, which was afterwards ſo much complained of.

[o] Cotton, p. 372. Walſing. p. 355.

[p] Cotton, p. 372. Parliamentary Hiſtory, vol. i. p. 470.

and

and offered to prove his own innocence by duel. The challenge was accepted: The time and place of combat were appointed: And as the event of this important trial by arms might require the interposition of legislative authority, the parliament thought it more suitable to delegate their power to a committee, than to prolong the session beyond the usual time which custom and general convenience had prescribed to it [q]. CHAP. XVII. 1398.

THE duke of Hereford was certainly very little delicate in the point of honour, when he revealed a private conversation to the ruin of the person who had entrusted him; and we may thence be more inclined to believe the duke of Norfolk's denial, than the other's asseveration. But Norfolk had in these transactions betrayed an equal neglect of honour, which brings him entirely on a level with his antagonist. Though he had publicly joined with the duke of Gloucester and his party in all the former acts of violence against the king; and his name stands among the appellants who accused the duke of Ireland and the other ministers; yet was he not ashamed publicly to impeach his former associates for the very crimes which he had concurred with them in committing; and his name increases the list of those appellants who brought them to a trial. Such were the principles and practices of those ancient knights and barons during the prevalence of the aristocratical government, and the reign of chivalry.

THE lists for this decision of truth and right were appointed at Coventry before the king: All the nobility of England bandied into parties, and adhered either to the one duke or the other: The whole nation was held in suspense with regard to the event: But when the two champions appeared in the field, ac-

[q] In the first year of Henry VI. when the authority of Parliament was great, and when that assembly could least be suspected of lying under violence, a like concession was made to the privy council, from like motives of convenience. See Cotton, p. 564.

CHAP. XVII.

1398. coutred for the combat, the king interpoſed, to prevent both the preſent effuſion of ſuch noble blood, and the future conſequences of the quarrel. By the advice and authority of the parliamentary commiſſioners he ſtopped the duel; and to ſhow his impartiality, he ordered, by the ſame authority, both the combatants to leave the kingdom[r]; aſſigning one country for the place of Norfolk's exile, which he declared perpetual; another for that of Hereford, which he limited to ten years.

HEREFORD was a man of great prudence and command of temper; and he behaved himſelf with ſo much ſubmiſſion in theſe delicate circumſtances, that the king, before his departure, promiſed to ſhorten the term of his exile four years; and he alſo granted him letters patent, by which he was empowered, in caſe any inheritance ſhould in the interval accrue to him, to enter immediately in poſſeſſion, and to poſtpone the doing of homage till his return.

Baniſhment of Henry duke of Hereford.

THE weakneſs and fluctuation of Richard's counſels appear no where more evident than in the conduct of this affair. No ſooner had Hereford left the kingdom, than the king's jealouſy of the power and riches of that prince's family revived; and he was ſenſible, that, by Gloceſter's death, he had only removed a counterpoiſe to the Lancaſtrian intereſt, which was now become formidable to his crown and kingdom. Being informed that Hereford had entered into a treaty of marriage with the daughter of the duke of Berry, uncle to the French king, he determined to prevent the finiſhing of an alliance which would ſo much extend the intereſt of his couſin in foreign countries; and he ſent over the earl of Saliſbury to Paris with a commiſſion for

1399. 3d Feb. that purpoſe. The death of the duke of Lancaſter, which happened ſoon after, called upon him to take

[r] Cotton, p. 380. Walſingham, p. 356.

new

new resolutions with regard to that opulent succession. The present duke, in consequence of the king's patent, desired to be put in possession of the estate and jurisdictions of his father: But Richard, afraid of strengthening the hands of a man whom he had already so much offended, applied to the parliamentary commissioners, and persuaded them, that this affair was but an appendage to that business which the parliament had delegated to them. By their authority he revoked his letters patent, and retained possession of the estate of Lancaster: And by the same authority he seized and tried the duke's attorney, who had procured and insisted on the letters, and he had him condemned as a traitor, for faithfully executing that trust to his master[s]. An extravagant act of power! even though the king changed, in favour of the attorney, the penalty of death into that of banishment. CHAP. XVII. 1399.

HENRY, the new duke of Lancaster, had acquired, by his conduct and abilities, the esteem of the public; and having served with distinction against the infidels in Lithuania, he had joined to his other praises those of piety and valour, virtues which have at all times a great influence over mankind, and were, during those ages, the qualities chiefly held in estimation[t]. He was connected with most of the principal nobility by blood, alliance, or friendship; and as the injury done him by the king might in its consequences affect all of them, he easily brought them, by a sense of common interest, to take part in his resentment. The people, who must have an object of affection, who found nothing in the king's person which they could love or revere, and who were even disgusted with many parts of his conduct[u], easily transferred to Henry that attach-

[s] Tyrrel, vol. iii. part 2. p. 991. from the records.

[t] Walsingham, p. 343.

[u] He levied fines upon those who had ten years before joined the duke of Gloucester and his party: They were obliged to pay him money, before he would allow them to enjoy the benefit of the indemnity;

CHAP. XVII. 1399.

attachment, which the death of the duke of Gloceſter had left without any fixed direction. His misfortunes were lamented; the injuſtice which he had ſuffered was complained of; and all men turned their eyes towards him, as the only perſon that could retrieve the loſt honour of the nation, or redreſs the ſuppoſed abuſes of the government.

Return of Henry.

WHILE ſuch were the diſpoſitions of the people, Richard had the imprudence to embark for Ireland, in order to revenge the death of his couſin, Roger earl of Marche, the preſumptive heir of the crown, who had lately been ſlain in a ſkirmiſh by the natives; and he thereby left the kingdom of England open to the attempts of his provoked and ambitious enemy. Henry, embarking at Nantz with a retinue of ſixty perſons, among whom were the archbiſhop of Canterbury and the young earl of Arundel, nephew to that prelate, landed at Ravenſpur in Yorkſhire; and was immediately joined by the earls of Northumberland and Weſtmoreland, two of the moſt potent barons in England. Here he took a ſolemn oath, that he had no other purpoſe in this invaſion, than to recover the dutchy of Lancaſter, unjuſtly detained from him; and he invited all his friends in England, and all lovers of their country, to ſecond him in this reaſonable and moderate pretenſion. Every place was in commotion: The malcontents in all quarters flew to arms; London diſcovered the ſtrongeſt ſymptoms of its diſpoſition to mutiny and rebellion: And Henry's army, increaſing on every day's march, ſoon amounted to the number of 60,000 combatants.

4th July.

General inſurrection.

THE duke of York was left guardian of the realm; a place to which his birth entitled him, but

demnity; and in the articles of charge againſt him, it is aſſerted, that the payment of one fine did not ſuffice. It is indeed likely, that his miniſters would abuſe the power put into their hands; and this grievance extended to very many people. Hiſtorians agree in repreſenting this practice as a great oppreſſion. See Otterbourne, p. 199.

which both his ſlender abilities, and his natural connexions with the duke of Lancaſter, rendered him utterly incapable of filling in ſuch a dangerous emergency. Such of the chief nobility as were attached to the crown, and could either have ſeconded the guardian's good intention, or have overawed his infidelity, had attended the king into Ireland; and the efforts of Richard's friends were every where more feeble than thoſe of his enemies. The duke of York, however, appointed the rendezvous of his forces at St. Alban's, and ſoon aſſembled an army of 40,000 men; but found them entirely deſtitute of zeal and attachment to the royal cauſe, and more inclined to join the party of the rebels. He hearkened therefore very readily to a meſſage from Henry, who entreated him not to oppoſe a loyal and humble ſupplicant in the recovery of his legal patrimony; and the guardian even declared publicly that he would ſecond his nephew in ſo reaſonable a requeſt. His army embraced with acclamations the ſame meaſures; and the duke of Lancaſter, reinforced by them, was now entirely maſter of the kingdom. He haſtened to Briſtol, into which ſome of the king's miniſters had thrown themſelves; and ſoon obliging that place to ſurrender, he yielded to the popular wiſhes, and without giving them a trial, ordered the earl of Wiltſhire, Sir John Buſſy, and Sir Henry Green, whom he there took priſoners, to be led to immediate execution.

CHAP. XVII. 1399.

The king, receiving intelligence of this invaſion and inſurrection, haſtened over from Ireland, and landed in Milford Haven with a body of 20,000 men: But even this army, ſo much inferior to the enemy, was either overawed by the general combination of the kingdom, or ſeized with the ſame ſpirit of diſaffection; and they gradually deſerted him, till he found that he had not above 6000 men who followed his ſtandard. It appeared, therefore, neceſſary to retire ſecretly from this ſmall body,

CHAP. XVII. 1399. which ſerved only to expoſe him to danger; and he fled to the Iſle of Angleſea, where he purpoſed to embark either for Ireland or France, and there await the favourable opportunities which the return of his ſubjects to a ſenſe of duty, or their future diſcontents againſt the duke of Lancaſter, would probably afford him. Henry, ſenſible of the danger, ſent to him the earl of Northumberland with the ſtrongeſt profeſſions of loyalty and ſubmiſſion; and that nobleman, by treachery and falſe oaths, made himſelf maſter of the king's perſon, and carried him to his enemy at Flint Caſtle. Richard was conducted to London by the duke of Lan-
1ſt Sept. caſter, who was there received with the acclamations of the mutinous populace. It is pretended that the recorder met him on the road, and in the name of the city, entreated him, for the public ſafety, to put Richard to death, with all his adherents who were priſoners [w]; but the duke prudently determined to make many others participate in his guilt, before he would proceed to thoſe extremities. For this purpoſe, he iſſued writs of election in the king's name, and appointed the immediate meeting of a parliament at Weſtminſter.

SUCH of the peers as were moſt devoted to the king, were either fled or impriſoned; and no opponents, even among the barons, dared to appear againſt Henry, amidſt that ſcene of outrage and violence, which commonly attends revolutions, eſpecially in England during thoſe turbulent ages. It is alſo eaſy to imagine, that a houſe of commons, elected during this univerſal ferment, and this triumph of the Lancaſtrian party, would be extremely attached to that cauſe, and ready to ſecond every ſuggeſtion of their leaders. That order, being as yet of too little weight to ſtem the torrent, was al-

[w] Walſingham.

ways

ways carried along with it, and ſerved only to increaſe the violence, which the public intereſt required it ſhould endeavour to control. The duke of Lancaſter, therefore, ſenſible that he ſhould be entirely maſter, began to carry his views to the crown itſelf; and he deliberated with his partiſans concerning the moſt proper means of effecting his daring purpoſe. He firſt extorted a reſignation from Richard [x]; but as he knew that this deed would plainly appear the reſult of force and fear, he alſo purpoſed, notwithſtanding the danger of the precedent to himſelf and his poſterity, to have him ſolemnly depoſed in parliament, for his pretended tyranny and miſconduct. A charge, conſiſting of thirty-three articles, was accordingly drawn up againſt him, and preſented to that aſſembly [y].

CHAP. XVII. 1399. Depoſition of the king. 28th Sept.

If we examine theſe articles, which are expreſſed with extreme acrimony againſt Richard, we ſhall find that, except ſome raſh ſpeeches which are imputed to him [z], and of whoſe reality, as they are ſaid to have paſſed in private converſation, we may reaſonably entertain ſome doubt; the chief amount of the charge is contained in his violent conduct during the two laſt years of his reign, and naturally divides itſelf into two principal heads. The firſt and moſt conſiderable is the revenge which he took on the princes and great barons, who had formerly uſurped, and ſtill perſevered in controlling and threatening, his authority; the ſecond is the violation of the laws and general privileges of his people. But the former, however irregular in many of its circumſtances, was fully ſupported by authority of parliament, and was but a copy of the violence which the princes and barons themſelves, during their former triumph, had exerciſed againſt him and his party.

[x] Knyghton, p. 2744. Otterbourne, p. 212. [y] Tyrrel, vol. iii. part 2. p. 1008. from the records. Knyghton, p. 2746. Otterbourne, p. 214. [z] Art. 16. 26.

The

CHAP. XVII. 1399.

The detention of Lancaſter's eſtate was, properly ſpeaking, a revocation, by parliamentary authority, of a grace, which the king himſelf had formerly granted him. The murder of Gloceſter (for the ſecret execution, however merited, of that prince, certainly deſerves this appellation) was a private deed, formed not any precedent, and implied not any uſurped or arbitrary power of the crown, which could juſtly give umbrage to the people. It really proceeded from a defect of power in the king, rather than from his ambition; and proves that inſtead of being dangerous to the conſtitution, he poſſeſſed not even the authority neceſſary for the execution of the laws.

CONCERNING the ſecond head of accuſation, as it moſtly conſiſts of general facts, was framed by Richard's inveterate enemies, and was never allowed to be anſwered by him or his friends, it is more difficult to form a judgment. The greater part of theſe grievances, imputed to Richard, ſeems to be the exertion of arbitrary prerogatives; ſuch as the diſpenſing power [a], levying purveyance [b], employing the marſhal's court [c], extorting loans [d], granting protections from law-ſuits [e]; prerogatives which, though often complained of, had often been exerciſed by his predeceſſors, and ſtill continued to be ſo by his ſucceſſors. But whether his irregular acts of this kind were more frequent, and injudicious, and violent than uſual, or were only laid hold of and exaggerated by the factions to which the weakneſs of his reign had given birth, we are not able, at this diſtance, to determine with certainty. There is, however, one circumſtance in which his conduct is viſibly different from that of his grandfather: He is not accuſed of having impoſed one arbitrary tax, without conſent of parliament, during his whole

[a] Art. 13. 17, 18. [b] Art. 22. [c] Art. 27.
[d] Art. 14. [e] Art. 16.

reign:

reign [f]: Scarcely a year paſſed during the reign of Edward, which was free from complaints with regard to this dangerous exertion of authority. But, perhaps, the aſcendant which Edward had acquired over the people, together with his great prudence, enabled him to make a uſe very advantageous to his ſubjects of this and other arbitrary prerogatives, and rendered them a ſmaller grievance in his hands, than a leſs abſolute authority in thoſe of his grandſon. This is a point which it would be raſh for us to decide poſitively on either ſide; but it is certain, that a charge drawn up by the duke of Lancaſter, and aſſented to by a parliament ſituated in thoſe circumſtances, forms no manner of preſumption with regard to the unuſual irregularity or violence of the king's conduct in this particular [g].

CHAP. XVII. 1399.

When the charge againſt Richard was preſented to the parliament, though it was liable, almoſt in every article, to objections, it was not canvaſſed, nor examined, nor diſputed in either houſe, and ſeemed to be received with univerſal approbation. One man alone, the biſhop of Carliſle, had the courage, amidſt this general diſloyalty and violence, to appear in defence of his unhappy maſter, and to plead his cauſe againſt all the power of the prevailing party. Though ſome topics, employed by that virtuous prelate, may ſeem to favour too much the doctrine of paſſive obedience, and to make too large a ſacrifice of the rights of mankind; he was naturally puſhed into that extreme by his abhorrence of the preſent licentious factions; and ſuch intrepidity, as well as diſintereſtedneſs of behaviour, proves, that

[f] We learn from Cotton, p. 362, that the king, by his chancellor, told the commons, *that they were ſunderly bound to him, and namely in forbearing to charge them with diſmes and fifteens, the which he meant* no more *to charge them in his own perſon.* Theſe words *no more* allude to the practice of his predeceſſors: He had not himſelf impoſed any arbitrary taxes: Even the parliament, in the articles of his depoſition, though they complain of heavy taxes, affirm not that they were impoſed illegally or by arbitrary will.

[g] See note [F] at the end of the volume.

whatever

CHAP. XVII

1399.

whatever his ſpeculative principles were, his heart was elevated far above the meanneſs and abject ſubmiſſion of a ſlave. He repreſented to the parliament, that all the abuſes of government which could juſtly be imputed to Richard, inſtead of amounting to tyranny, were merely the reſult of error, youth, or miſguided counſel, and admitted of a remedy, more eaſy and ſalutary than a total ſubverſion of the conſtitution. That even had they been much more violent and dangerous than they really were, they had chiefly proceeded from former examples of reſiſtance, which, making the prince ſenſible of his precarious ſituation, had obliged him to eſtabliſh his throne by irregular and arbitrary expedients. That a rebellious diſpoſition in ſubjects was the principal cauſe of tyranny in kings: Laws could never ſecure the ſubject, which did not give ſecurity to the ſovereign: And if the maxim of inviolable loyalty, which formed the baſis of the Engliſh government, were once rejected, the privileges belonging to the ſeveral orders of the ſtate, inſtead of being fortified by that licentiouſneſs, would thereby loſe the ſureſt foundation of their force and ſtability. That the parliamentary depoſition of Edward II. far from making a precedent which could control this maxim, was only an example of ſucceſsful violence; and it was ſufficiently to be lamented, that crimes were ſo often committed in the world, without eſtabliſhing principles which might juſtify and authoriſe them. That even that precedent, falſe and dangerous as it was, could never warrant the preſent exceſſes, which were ſo much greater, and which would entail diſtraction and miſery on the nation, to the lateſt poſterity. That the ſucceſſion, at leaſt, of the crown, was then preſerved inviolate: The lineal heir was placed on the throne: And the people had an opportunity, by their legal obedience to him, of making atonement for the violence which they had committed againſt his predeceſſor. That a deſcendant of Lionel

duke of Clarence, the elder brother of the late duke of Lancaſter, had been declared in parliament ſucceſſor to the crown: He had left poſterity: And their title, however it might be overpowered by preſent force and faction, could never be obliterated from the minds of the people. That if the turbulent diſpoſition alone of the nation had overturned the well-eſtabliſhed throne of ſo good a prince as Richard; what bloody commotions muſt enſue, when the ſame cauſe was united to the motive of reſtoring the legal and undoubted heir to his authority? That the new government, intended to be eſtabliſhed, would ſtand on no principle; and would ſcarcely retain any pretence, by which it could challenge the obedience of men of ſenſe and virtue. That the claim of lineal deſcent was ſo groſs as ſcarcely to deceive the moſt ignorant of the populace: Conqueſt could never be pleaded by a rebel againſt his ſovereign: The conſent of the people had no authority in a monarchy not derived from conſent, but eſtabliſhed by hereditary right; and however the nation might be juſtified in depoſing the miſguided Richard, it could never have any reaſon for ſetting aſide his lawful heir and ſucceſſor, who was plainly innocent. And that the duke of Lancaſter would give them but a bad ſpecimen of the legal moderation which might be expected from his future government, if he added to the crime of his paſt rebellion, the guilt of excluding the family, which, both by right of blood, and by declaration of parliament, would, in caſe of Richard's demiſe, or voluntary reſignation, have been received as the undoubted heirs of the monarchy [h].

CHAP. XVII. 1399.

All the circumſtances of this event, compared to thoſe which attended the late revolution in 1688, ſhow the difference between a great and civilized nation, deliberately vindicating its eſtabliſhed privi-

[h] Sir John Heywarde, p. 101.

leges,

CHAP. XVII. 1399.

leges, and a turbulent and barbarous ariſtocracy, plunging headlong from the extremes of one faction into thoſe of another. This noble freedom of the biſhop of Carliſle, inſtead of being applauded, was not ſo much as tolerated: He was immediately arreſted, by order of the duke of Lancaſter, and ſent a priſoner to the abbey of St. Albans. No farther debate was attempted: Thirty-three long articles of charge were, in one meeting, voted againſt Richard; and voted unanimouſly by the ſame peers and prelates who a little before had, voluntarily and unanimouſly, authoriſed thoſe very acts of violence of which they now complained. That prince was depoſed by the ſuffrages of both houſes; and the throne being now vacant, the duke of Lancaſter ſtepped forth, and having croſſed himſelf on the forehead and on the breaſt, and called upon the name of Chriſt [i], he pronounced theſe words, which we ſhall give in the original language, becauſe of their ſingularity:

In the name of Fadher, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, I Henry of Lancaſter challenge this rewme of Ynglande, and the croun, with all the membres, and the appurtenances; als I that am deſcendit by right line of the blode, coming fro the gude king Henry therde, and throge that right that God of his grace hath ſent me, with helpe of kyn, and of my frendes to recover it; the which rewme was in poynt to be ondone by defaut of governance, and ondoying of the gude lawes [k].

In order to underſtand this ſpeech, it muſt be obſerved, that there was a ſilly ſtory, received among ſome of the loweſt vulgar, that Edmond earl of Lancaſter, ſon of Henry III. was really the elder brother of Edward I.; but that, by reaſon of ſome deformity in his perſon, he had been poſtponed in the ſucceſſion, and his younger brother impoſed on the

i Cotton, p. 389. k Knyghton, p. 2757.

nation

nation in his ſtead. As the preſent duke of Lancaſter inherited from Edmond by his mother, this genealogy made him the true heir of the monarchy; and it is therefore inſinuated in Henry's ſpeech: But the abſurdity was too groſs to be openly avowed either by him or by the parliament. The caſe is the ſame with regard to his right of conqueſt: He was a ſubject who rebelled againſt his ſovereign: He entered the kingdom with a retinue of no more than ſixty perſons: He could not therefore be the conqueror of England; and this right is accordingly inſinuated, not avowed. Still there is a third claim derived from his merits in ſaving the nation from tyranny and oppreſſion; and this claim is alſo inſinuated: But as it ſeemed, by its nature, better calculated as a reaſon for his being *elected* king by a free choice, than for giving him an immediate right of poſſeſſion, he durſt not ſpeak openly even on this head; and to obviate any notion of election, he challenges the crown as his due, either by acquiſition or inheritance. The whole forms ſuch a piece of jargon and nonſenſe, as is almoſt without example: No objection, however, was made to it in parliament: The unanimous voice of lords and commons placed Henry on the throne: He became king, nobody could tell how or wherefore: The title of the houſe of Marche, formerly recognized by parliament, was neither invalidated nor repealed; but paſſed over in total ſilence: And as a concern for the liberties of the people ſeems to have had no hand in this revolution, their right to diſpoſe of the government, as well as all their other privileges, was left preciſely on the ſame footing as before. But Henry having, when he claimed the crown, dropped ſome obſcure hint concerning conqueſt, which, it was thought, might endanger theſe privileges, he ſoon after made a public declaration, that he did not thereby intend to deprive any one of his franchiſes or

CHAP. XVII. 1399.

CHAP. XVII. 1399.

or liberties[l]: Which was the only circumſtance, where we ſhall find meaning or common ſenſe, in all theſe tranſactions.

6th Oct. The ſubſequent events diſcover the ſame headlong violence of conduct, and the ſame rude notions of civil government. The depoſition of Richard diſſolved the parliament: It was neceſſary to ſummon a new one: And Henry, in ſix days after, called together, without any new election, the ſame members; and this aſſembly he denominated a new parliament. They were employed in the uſual taſk of reverſing every deed of the oppoſite party. All the acts of the laſt parliament of Richard, which had been confirmed by their oaths, and by a papal bull, were abrogated: All the acts which had paſſed in the parliament where Gloceſter prevailed, which had alſo been confirmed by their oaths, but which had been abrogated by Richard, were anew eſtabliſhed[m]. The anſwers of Treſilian, and the other judges, which a parliament had annulled, but which a new parliament, and new judges, had approved, here received a ſecond condemnation. The peers who had accuſed Gloceſter, Arundel, and Warwic, and who had received higher titles for that piece of ſervice, were all of them degraded from their new dignities: Even the practice of proſecuting appeals in parliament, which bore the air of a violent confederacy againſt an individual, rather than of a legal indictment, was wholly aboliſhed; and trials were reſtored to the courſe of common law[n]. The natural effect of this conduct was to render the people giddy with ſuch rapid and perpetual changes, and to make them loſe all notions of right and wrong in the meaſures of government.

23d Oct. The earl of Northumberland made a motion, in the houſe of peers, with regard to the unhappy

[l] Knyghton, p. 2759. Otterbourne, p. 220.
[m] Cotton, p. 390. [n] Henry IV. cap. 14.

prince

prince whom they had depoſed. He aſked them what advice they would give the king for the future treatment of him; ſince Henry was reſolved to ſpare his life. They unanimouſly replied, that he ſhould be impriſoned under a ſecure guard, in ſome ſecret place, and ſhould be deprived of all commerce with any of his friends or partiſans. It was eaſy to foreſee, that he would not long remain alive in the hands of ſuch barbarous and ſanguinary enemies. Hiſtorians differ with regard to the manner in which he was murdered. It was long the prevailing opinion, that ſir Piers Exton, and others of his guards, fell upon him in the caſtle of Pomfret, where he was confined, and diſpatched him with their halberts. But it is more probable, that he was ſtarved to death in priſon; and after all ſuſtenance was denied him, he prolonged his unhappy life, it is ſaid, for a fortnight, before he reached the end of his miſeries. This account is more conſiſtent with the ſtory, that his body was expoſed in public, and that no marks of violence were obſerved upon it. He died in the thirty-fourth year of his age, and the twenty-third of his reign. He left no poſterity, either legitimate or illegitimate.

CHAP. XVII. 1399.

Murder of the king.

All the writers, who have tranſmitted to us the hiſtory of Richard, lived during the reigns of the Lancaſtrian princes; and candour requires, that we ſhould not give entire credit to the reproaches which they have thrown upon his memory. But, after making all proper allowances, he ſtill appears to have been a weak prince, and unfit for government, leſs for want of natural parts and capacity, than of ſolid judgment and a good education. He was violent in his temper; profuſe in his expence; fond of idle ſhow and magnificence; devoted to favourites; and addicted to pleaſure: Paſſions, all of them, the moſt inconſiſtent with a prudent œconomy, and conſequently dangerous in a limited and mixed government. Had he poſſeſſed the talents of gaining,

His character.

CHAP. XVII. 1399.

and ſtill more thoſe of overawing, his great barons, he might have eſcaped all the misfortunes of his reign, and been allowed to carry much farther his oppreſſions over the people, if he really was guilty of any, without their daring to rebel, or even to murmur againſt him. But when the grandees were tempted, by his want of prudence and of vigour, to reſiſt his authority, and execute the moſt violent enterpriſes upon him, he was naturally led to ſeek an opportunity of retaliation; juſtice was neglected; the lives of the chief nobility were ſacrificed; and all theſe enormities ſeem to have proceeded leſs from a ſettled deſign of eſtabliſhing arbitrary power, than from the inſolence of victory, and the neceſſities of the king's ſituation. The manners indeed of the age were the chief ſource of ſuch violence: Laws, which were feebly executed in peaceable times, loſt all their authority during public convulſions: Both parties were alike guilty: Or if any difference may be remarked between them, we ſhall find, that the authority of the crown, being more legal, was commonly carried, when it prevailed, to leſs deſperate extremities than was that of the ariſtocracy.

On comparing the conduct and events of this reign, with thoſe of the preceding, we ſhall find equal reaſon to admire Edward, and to blame Richard; but the circumſtance of oppoſition, ſurely, will not lie in the ſtrict regard paid by the former to national privileges, and the neglect of them by the latter. On the contrary, the prince of ſmall abilities, as he felt his want of power, ſeems to have been more moderate in this reſpect than the other. Every parliament aſſembled during the reign of Edward, remonſtrates againſt the exertion of ſome arbitrary prerogative or other: We hear not any complaints of that kind during the reign of Richard, till the aſſembling of his laſt parliament, which was ſummoned by his inveterate enemies, which dethroned him, which framed their complaints during the time

of the most furious convulsions, and whose testimony must therefore have, on that account, much less authority with every equitable judge [o]. Both these princes experienced the encroachments of the Great upon their authority. Edward, reduced to necessities, was obliged to make an express bargain with his parliament, and to sell some of his prerogatives for present supply; but as they were acquainted with his genius and capacity, they ventured not to demand any exorbitant concessions, or such as were incompatible with regal and sovereign power: The weakness of Richard tempted the parliament to extort a commission, which, in a manner, dethroned the prince, and transferred the sceptre into the hands of the nobility. The events of these encroachments were also suitable to the character of each. Edward had no sooner gotten the supply, than he departed from the engagements which had induced the parliament to grant it; he openly told his people, that he had but *dissembled* with them when he seemed to make them these concessions; and he resumed and retained all his prerogatives. But Richard, because he was detected in consulting and deliberating with the judges on the lawfulness of restoring the constitution, found his barons immediately in arms against him; was deprived of his liberty; saw his favourites, his ministers, his tutor, butchered before his face, or banished and attainted; and was obliged to give way to all this violence. There cannot be a more remarkable contrast between the fortunes of two princes: It were happy for society, did this contrast always depend on the justice or injustice of the measures which men embrace; and not rather on the different degrees of prudence and vigour with which those measures are supported.

CHAP. XVII. 1399.

[o] Peruse, in this view, the abridgment of the records, by sir Robert Cotton, during these two reigns.

CHAP. XVII.

1399. Miscellaneous transactions during this reign.

THERE was a sensible decay of ecclesiastical authority during this period. The disgust, which the laity had received from the numerous usurpations both of the court of Rome, and of their own clergy, had very much weaned the kingdom from superstition; and strong symptoms appeared, from time to time, of a general desire to shake off the bondage of the Romish church. In the committee of eighteen, to whom Richard's last parliament delegated their whole power, there is not the name of one ecclesiastic to be found; a neglect which is almost without example, while the catholic religion subsisted in England [P].

THE aversion entertained against the established church soon found principles and tenets and reasonings, by which it could justify and support itself. John Wickliffe, a secular priest, educated at Oxford, began in the latter end of Edward III. to spread the doctrine of reformation by his discourses, sermons, and writings; and he made many disciples among men of all ranks and stations. He seems to have been a man of parts and learning; and has the honour of being the first person in Europe, that publicly called in question those principles, which had universally passed for certain and undisputed during so many ages. Wickliffe himself, as well as his disciples, who received the name of Wickliffites, or Lollards, was distinguished by a great austerity of life and manners; a circumstance common to almost all those who dogmatize in any new way; both because men, who draw to them the attention of the public, and expose themselves to the odium of great multitudes, are obliged to be very guarded in their conduct, and because few, who have a strong propensity to pleasure or business, will enter upon so difficult and laborious an undertaking. The doctrines of Wickliffe, being derived from his search

[P] See note [G] at the end of the volume.

into

into the ſcriptures, and into eccleſiaſtical antiquity, were nearly the ſame with thoſe which were propagated by the reformers in the ſixteenth century: He only carried ſome of them farther than was done by the more ſober part of theſe reformers. He denied the doctrine of the real preſence, the ſupremacy of the church of Rome, the merit of monaſtic vows: He maintained, that the ſcriptures were the ſole rule of faith; that the church was dependant on the ſtate, and ſhould be reformed by it; that the clergy ought to poſſeſs no eſtates; that the begging friars were a nuiſance, and ought not to be ſupported [q]; that the numerous ceremonies of the church were hurtful to true piety: He aſſerted, that oaths were unlawful, that dominion was founded in grace, that every thing was ſubject to fate and deſtiny, and that all men were preordained either to eternal ſalvation or reprobation [r]. From the whole of his doctrines, Wickliffe appears to have been ſtrongly tinctured with enthuſiaſm, and to have been thereby the better qualified to oppoſe a church, whoſe chief characteriſtic is ſuperſtition.

CHAP. XVII. 1399.

THE propagation of theſe principles gave great alarm to the clergy; and a bull was iſſued by pope Gregory XI. for taking Wickliffe into cuſtody, and examining into the ſcope of his opinions [s]. Courteney, biſhop of London, cited him before his tribunal; but the reformer had now acquired powerful protectors, who ſcreened him from the eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction. The duke of Lancaſter, who then governed the kingdom, encouraged the principles of Wickliffe; and he made no ſcruple, as well as lord Piercy, the mareſchal, to appear openly in court with him, in order to give him countenance upon his trial: He even inſiſted that Wickliffe ſhould ſit in the biſhop's preſence, while his principles were

[q] Walſingham, p. 191. 208. 283, 284. Spelman. Concil. vol. ii. p. 630. Knyghton, p. 2657. [r] Harpsfield, p. 668. 673, 674. Waldenſ. tom. i. lib. 3. art. 1. cap. 8. [s] Spelm. Conc. vol. ii. p. 621. Walſingham, p. 201, 202, 203.

CHAP. XVII.

1399. examined: Courtenay exclaimed againſt the inſult: The Londoners, thinking their prelate affronted, attacked the duke and mareſch.., who eſcaped from their hands with ſome difficulty[t]. And the populace, ſoon after, broke into the houſes of both theſe noblemen, threatened their perſons, and plundered their goods. The biſhop of London had the merit of appeaſing their fury and reſentment.

THE duke of Lancaſter, however, ſtill continued his protection to Wickliffe during the minority of Richard; and the principles of that reformer had ſo far propagated themſelves, that, when the pope ſent to Oxford a new bull againſt theſe doctrines, the univerſity deliberated for ſome time whether they ſhould receive the bull; and they never took any vigorous meaſures in conſequence of the papal orders[u]. Even the populace of London were at length brought to entertain favourable ſentiments of this reformer: When he was cited before a ſynod at Lambeth, they broke into the aſſembly, and ſo overawed the prelates, who found both the people and the court againſt them, that they diſmiſſed him without any farther cenſure.

THE clergy, we may well believe, were more wanting in power than in inclination to puniſh this new hereſy, which ſtruck at all their credit, poſſeſſions, and authority. But there was hitherto no law in England, by which the ſecular arm was authoriſed to ſupport orthodoxy; and the eccleſiaſtics endeavoured to ſupply the defect by an extraordinary and unwarrantable artifice. In the year 1381, there was an act paſſed, requiring ſheriffs to apprehend the preachers of hereſy and their abettors; but this ſtatute had been ſurreptitiouſly obtained by the clergy, and had the formality of an inrolment without the conſent of the commons. In the ſubſequent ſeſſion the lower houſe complained of the fraud; affirmed, that they had no intention to bind themſelves to

[t] Harpſfield in Hiſt. Wickl. p. 683. [u] Wood's Ant. Oxon. lib. i. p. 191, &c. Walſingham, p. 201.

the

the prelates farther than their anceſtors had done before them; and required that the pretended ſtatute ſhould be repealed; which was done accordingly [w]. But it is remarkable that, notwithſtanding this vigilance of the commons, the clergy had ſo much art and influence that the repeal was ſuppreſſed; and the act, which never had any legal authority, remains to this day upon the ſtatute-book [x]: Though the clergy ſtill thought proper to keep it in reſerve, and not proceed to the immediate execution of it. CHAP. XVII. 1399.

But, beſides this defect of power in the church, which ſaved Wickliffe, that reformer himſelf, notwithſtanding his enthuſiaſm, ſeems not to have been actuated by the ſpirit of martyrdom; and, in all ſubſequent trials before the prelates, he ſo explained away his doctrine by tortured meanings, as to render it quite innocent and inoffenſive [y]. Moſt of his followers imitated his cautious diſpoſition, and ſaved themſelves either by recantations or explanations. He died of a palſy, in the year 1385, at his rectory of Lutterworth, in the county of Leiceſter; and the clergy, mortified that he ſhould have eſcaped their vengeance, took care, beſides aſſuring the people of his eternal damnation, to repreſent his laſt diſtemper as a viſible judgment of Heaven upon him for his multiplied hereſies and impieties [z].

The proſelytes, however, of Wickliffe's opinions ſtill increaſed in England [a]: Some monkiſh writers repreſent one half of the kingdom as infected by thoſe principles: They were carried over to Bohemia by ſome youth of that nation, who ſtudied at Oxford: But though the age ſeemed ſtrongly diſpoſed to receive them, affairs were not yet fully ripe for this great revolution; and the finiſhing blow to eccleſiaſtical power was reſerved to a period of more curioſity, literature, and inclination for novelties.

[w] Cotton's Abridgment, p. 285. [x] 5 Rich. II. chap. 5.
[y] Walſingham, p. 206. Knyghton, p. 2655, 2656. [z] Walſingham, p. 312. Ypod Neuſt. p. 337. [a] Knyghton, p. 2663.

CHAP. XVII. 1393.

MEANWHILE the Engliſh parliament continued to check the clergy and the court of Rome, by more ſober and more legal expedients. They enacted anew the ſtatute of *proviſors*, and affixed higher penalties to the tranſgreſſion of it, which, in ſome inſtances, was even made capital [b]. The court of Rome had fallen upon a new device, which increaſed their authority over the prelates: The pope, who found that the expedient of arbitrarily depriving them was violent and liable to oppoſition, attained the ſame end, by transferring ſuch of them as were obnoxious to poorer ſees, and even to nominal ſees, *in partibus infidelium*. It was thus that the archbiſhop of York, and the biſhops of Durham and Chicheſter, the king's miniſters, had been treated after the prevalence of Gloceſter's faction: The biſhop of Carliſle met with the ſame fate after the acceſſion of Henry IV. For the pope always joined with the prevailing powers when they did not thwart his pretenſions. The parliament, in the reign of Richard, enacted a law againſt this abuſe: And the king made a general remonſtrance to the court of Rome againſt all thoſe uſurpations which he calls *horrible exceſſes* of that court [c].

IT was uſual for the church, that they might elude the mortmain act, to make their votaries leave lands in truſt to certain perſons, under whoſe name the clergy enjoyed the benefit of the bequeſt: The parliament alſo ſtopped the progreſs of this abuſe [d]. In the 17th of the king, the commons prayed, *that remedy might be had againſt ſuch religious perſons as cauſe their villains to marry free women inheritable, whereby the eſtate comes to thoſe religious hands by colluſion* . . This was a new device of the clergy.

THE papacy was, at this time, ſomewhat weakened by a ſchiſm, which laſted during forty years,

[b] 13 Rich. II. cap. 3. 16 Rich. II. cap. 4. [c] Rymer, vol. vii. p. 672. [d] Knyghton, p. 27. 38. [e] Cotton, p. 355.

and

and gave great scandal to the devoted partisans of the holy see. After the pope had resided many years at Avignon, Gregory XI. was persuaded to return to Rome; and upon his death, which happened in 1380, the Romans, resolute to fix, for the future, the seat of the papacy in Italy, besieged the cardinals in the conclave, and compelled them, though they were mostly Frenchmen, to elect Urban VI. an Italian, into that high dignity. The French cardinals, as soon as they recovered their liberty, fled from Rome, and protesting against the forced election, chose Robert, son of the count of Geneva, who took the name of Clement VII. and resided at Avignon. All the kingdoms of Christendom, according to the several interests and inclinations, were divided between these two pontiffs. The court of France adhered to Clement, and was followed by its allies, the king of Castile, and the king of Scotland: England, of course, was thrown into the other party, and declared for Urban. Thus the appellation of *Clementines* and *Urbanists* distracted Europe for several years; and each party damned the other as schismatics, and as rebels to the true vicar of Christ. But this circumstance, though it weakened the papal authority, had not so great an effect as might naturally be imagined. Though any king could easily at first make his kingdom embrace the party of one pope or the other, or even keep it some time in suspense between them, he could not so easily transfer his obedience at pleasure: The people attached themselves to their own party, as to a religious opinion; and conceived an extreme abhorrence to the opposite party, whom they regarded as little better than Saracens or infidels. Crusades were even undertaken in this quarrel; and the zealous bishop of Norwich in particular led over, in 1382, near 60,000 bigots into Flanders against the Clementines; but, after losing a great part of his followers, he returned with disgrace into

CHAP. XVII. 1399.

CHAP. XVII. 1399.

England[f]. Each pope, ſenſible, from this prevailing ſpirit among the people, that the kingdom which once embraced his cauſe would always adhere to him, boldly maintained all the pretenſions of his ſee, and ſtood not much more in awe of the temporal ſovereigns, than if his authority had not been endangered by a rival.

We meet with this preamble to a law enacted at the very beginning of this reign: "Whereas divers "perſons of ſmall garriſon of land or other poſ- "ſeſſions, do make great retinue of people, as well "of eſquires as of others, in many parts of the "realm, giving to them hats and other livery of "one ſuit by year, taking again towards them the "value of the ſame livery, or percaſe the double "value, by ſuch covenant and aſſurance, that every "of them ſhall maintain other in all quarrels, be "they reaſonable or unreaſonable, to the great "miſchief and oppreſſion of the people, &c.[g]" This preamble contains a true picture of the ſtate of the kingdom. The laws had been ſo feebly executed, even during the long, active, and vigilant reign of Edward III. that no ſubject could truſt to their protection. Men openly aſſociated themſelves under the patronage of ſome great baron, for their mutual defence. They wore public badges, by which their confederacy was diſtinguiſhed. They ſupported each other in all quarrels, iniquities, extortions, murders, robberies, and other crimes. Their chief was more their ſovereign than the king himſelf; and their own band was more connected with them than their country. Hence the perpetual turbulence, diſorders, factions, and civil wars of thoſe times: Hence the ſmall regard paid to a character or the opinion of the public: Hence the large diſcretionary prerogatives of the crown, and the danger which might

[f] Froiſſard, lib. ii. chap. 133, 134. Walſingham, p. 298, 299, 300, &c. Knyghton, p. 2671. [g] 1 Rich. II. chap. 7.

have

have enſued from the too great limitation of them. If the king had poſſeſſed no arbitrary powers, while all the nobles aſſumed and exerciſed them, there muſt have enſued an abſolute anarchy in the ſtate. CHAP. XVII. 1399.

One great miſchief attending theſe confederacies, was the extorting from the king pardons for the moſt enormous crimes. The parliament often endeavoured in the laſt reign to deprive the prince of this prerogative; but in the preſent, they were content with an abridgment of it. They enacted, that no pardon for rapes or for murder from malice prepenſe ſhould be valid, unleſs the crime were particularly ſpecified in it[h]. There were alſo ſome other circumſtances required for paſſing any pardon of this kind: An excellent law; but ill obſerved, like moſt laws that thwart the manners of the people, and the prevailing cuſtoms of the times.

It is eaſy to obſerve, from theſe voluntary aſſociations among the people, that the whole force of the feudal ſyſtem was in a manner diſſolved, and that the Engliſh had nearly returned, in that particular, to the ſame ſituation in which they ſtood before the Norman conqueſt. It was, indeed, impoſſible that that ſyſtem could long ſubſiſt under the perpetual revolutions to which landed property is every where ſubject. When the great feudal baronies were firſt erected, the lord lived in opulence in the midſt of his vaſſals: He was in a ſituation to protect and cheriſh and defend them: The quality of patron naturally united itſelf to that of ſuperior: And theſe two principles of authority mutually ſupported each other. But when, by the various diviſions and mixtures of property, a man's ſuperior came to live at a diſtance from him, and could no longer give him ſhelter or countenance; the tie gradually became more fictitious than real: New connections from vicinity or other cauſes were formed:

[h] 13 Rich. II. chap. 1.

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CHAP. XVII. 1399.

Protection was ſought by voluntary ſervices and attachment: The appearance of valour, ſpirit, abilities in any great man, extended his intereſt very far: And if the ſovereign were deficient in theſe qualities, he was no leſs, if not more expoſed to the uſurpations of the ariſtocracy, than even during the vigour of the feudal ſyſtem.

THE greateſt novelty introduced into the civil government during this reign was the creation of peers by patent. Lord Beauchamp of Holt was the firſt peer that was advanced to the houſe of lords in this manner. The practice of levying benevolences is alſo firſt mentioned in the preſent reign.

THIS prince lived in a more magnificent manner than perhaps any of his predeceſſors or ſucceſſors. His houſehold conſiſted of 10,000 perſons: He had 300 in his kitchen; and all the other offices were furniſhed in proportion[i]. It muſt be remarked, that this enormous train had tables ſupplied them at the king's expence, according to the mode of that age. Such prodigality was probably the ſource of many exactions by purveyors, and was one chief reaſon of the public diſcontents.

[i] Harding: This poet ſays, that he ſpeaks from the authority of a clerk of the green cloth.

Hall sculp.t

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CHAP. XVIII.

HENRY IV.

Title of the king——An insurrection——An insurrection in Wales——The earl of Northumberland rebels——Battle of Shrewsbury——State of Scotland—— Parliamentary transactions —— Death —and character of the king.

THE English had so long been familiarised to the hereditary succession of their monarchs, the instances of departure from it had always borne such strong symptoms of injustice and violence, and so little of a national choice or election, and the returns to the true line had ever been deemed such fortunate incidents in their history, that Henry was afraid lest, in resting his title on the consent of the people, he should build on a foundation to which the people themselves were not accustomed, and whose solidity they would with difficulty be brought to recognize. The idea too of choice seemed always to imply that of conditions, and a right of recalling the consent upon any supposed violation of them; an idea which was not naturally agreeable to a sovereign, and might, in England, be dangerous to the subjects, who, lying so much under the influence of turbulent nobles, had ever paid but an imperfect obedience even to their hereditary princes. For these reasons, Henry was determined never to have recourse to this claim; the only one on which his authority could consistently stand: He rather chose to patch up his title in the best manner he could from other pretensions: And,

CHAP. XVIII.

1399. Title of the king.

CHAP. XVIII. 1399.

And, in the end, he left himſelf, in the eyes of men of ſenſe, no ground of right but his preſent poſſeſſion; a very precarious foundation, which, by its very nature, was liable to be overthrown by every faction of the great, or prejudice of the people. He had indeed a preſent advantage over his competitor: The heir of the houſe of Mortimer, who had been declared in parliament heir to the crown, was a boy of ſeven years of age[k]: His friends conſulted his ſafety, by keeping ſilence with regard to his title: Henry detained him and his younger brother in an honourable cuſtody at Windſor caſtle: But he had reaſon to dread, that, in proportion as that nobleman grew to man's eſtate, he would draw to him the attachment of the people, and make them reflect on the fraud, violence, and injuſtice, by which he had been excluded from the throne. Many favourable topics would occur in his behalf: He was a native of England; poſſeſſed an extenſive intereſt from the greatneſs and alliances of his family; however criminal the depoſed monarch, this youth was intirely innocent; he was of the ſame religion, and educated in the ſame manners with the people, and could not be governed by any ſeparate intereſt: Theſe views would all concur to favour his claim; and though the abilities of the preſent prince might ward off any dangerous revolution, it was juſtly to be apprehended, that his authority could with difficulty be brought to equal that of his predeceſſors.

Henry, in his very firſt parliament, had reaſon to ſee the danger attending that ſtation which he had aſſumed, and the obſtacles which he would meet with in governing an unruly ariſtocracy, always divided by faction, and at preſent inflamed with the reſentments conſequent on ſuch recent convulſions. The peers, on their aſſembling, broke out into violent animoſities againſt each other; forty gauntlets,

[k] Dugdale, vol. i. p. 151.

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the pledges of furious battle, were thrown on the floor of the houſe by noblemen who gave mutual challenges; and *liar* and *traitor* reſounded from all quarters. The king had ſo much authority with theſe doughty champions, as to prevent all the combats which they threatened; but he was not able to bring them to a proper compoſure, or to an amicable diſpoſition towards each other. CHAP. XVIII. 1399.

1400. An inſurrection.

It was not long before theſe paſſions broke into action. The earls of Rutland, Kent, and Huntingdon, and lord Spencer, who were now degraded from the reſpective titles of Albemarle, Surrey, Exeter, and Gloceſter, conferred on them by Richard, entered into a conſpiracy, together with the earl of Saliſbury and lord Lumley, for raiſing an inſurrection, and for ſeizing the king's perſon at Windſor [l]; but the treachery of Rutland gave him warning of the danger. He ſuddenly withdrew to London; and the conſpirators, who came to Windſor with a body of 500 horſe, found that they had miſſed this blow, on which all the ſucceſs of their enterpriſe depended. Henry appeared next day at Kingſton upon Thames, at the head of 20,000 men, moſtly drawn from the city; and his enemies, unable to reſiſt his power, diſperſed themſelves, with a view of raiſing their followers in the ſeveral counties which were the ſeat of their intereſt. But the adherents of the king were hot in the purſuit, and every where oppoſed themſelves to their progreſs. The earls of Kent and Saliſbury were ſeized at Cirenceſter by the citizens; and were next day beheaded without farther ceremony, according to the cuſtom of the times [m]. The citizens of Briſtol treated Spencer and Lumley in the ſame manner. The earl of Huntingdon, ſir Thomas Blount, and ſir Benedict Sely, who were alſo taken priſoners, ſuffered death, with many others of the conſpirators, by orders from

[l] Walſingham, p. 362. Otterbourne, p. 224.
[m] Walſingham, p. 365. Ypod. Neuſt. p. 556.

Henry.

CHAP. XVIII. 1400.

Henry. And when the quarters of these unhappy men were brought to London, no less than eighteen bishops and thirty-two mitred abbots joined the populace, and met them with the most indecent marks of joy and exultation.

But the spectacle, the most shocking to every one who retained any sentiment either of honour or humanity, still remained. The earl of Rutland appeared, carrying on a pole the head of lord Spencer, his brother-in-law, which he presented in triumph to Henry as a testimony of his loyalty. This infamous man, who was soon after duke of York by the death of his father, and first prince of the blood, had been instrumental in the murder of his uncle the duke of Gloucester [n]; had then deserted Richard, by whom he was trusted; had conspired against the life of Henry, to whom he had sworn allegiance; had betrayed his associates, whom he had seduced into this enterprise; and now displayed, in the face of the world, these badges of his multiplied dishonour.

1401. Henry was sensible, that though the execution of these conspirators might seem to give security to his throne, the animosities, which remain after such bloody scenes, are always dangerous to royal authority; and he therefore determined not to increase, by any hazardous enterprise, those numerous enemies with whom he was every where environed. While a subject, he was believed to have strongly imbibed all the principles of his father, the duke of Lancaster, and to have adopted the prejudices which the Lollards inspired against the abuses of the established church: But, finding himself possessed of the throne by so precarious a title, he thought superstition a necessary implement of public authority; and he resolved, by every expedient, to pay court to the clergy. There were hitherto no penal laws enacted against heresy; an indulgence which had proceeded,

[n] Dugdale, vol. ii. p. 171.

not

not from a spirit of toleration in the Romish church, but from the ignorance and simplicity of the people, which had rendered them unfit either for starting or receiving any new or curious doctrines, and which needed not to be restrained by rigorous penalties. But when the learning and genius of Wickliffe had once broken, in some measure, the fetters of prejudice, the ecclesiastics called aloud for the punishment of his disciples; and the king, who was very little scrupulous in his conduct, was easily induced to sacrifice his principles to his interest, and to acquire the favour of the church by that most effectual method, the gratifying of their vengeance against opponents. He engaged the parliament to pass a law for that purpose: It was enacted, that when any heretic, who relapsed, or refused to abjure his opinions, was delivered over to the secular arm by the bishop or his commissaries, he should be committed to the flames by the civil magistrate before the whole people [o]. This weapon did not long remain unemployed in the hands of the clergy: William Sautré, rector of St. Osithes in London, had been condemned by the convocation of Canterbury; his sentence was ratified by the house of peers; the king issued his writ for the execution [p]; and the unhappy man atoned for his erroneous opinions by the penalty of fire. This is the first instance of that kind in England; and thus one horror more was added to those dismal scenes which at that time were already but too familiar to the people.

CHAP. XVIII. 1401.

But the utmost precaution and prudence of Henry could not shield him from those numerous inquietudes which assailed him from every quarter. The connexions of Richard with the royal family of France made that court exert its activity to recover his authority, or revenge his death [q]; but

[o] 2 Henry IV. chap. vii.
[p] Rymer, vol. viii. p. 178.
[q] Ibid. p. 123.

CHAP. XVIII. 1401.

though the confuſions in England tempted the French to engage in ſome enterpriſe by which they might diſtreſs their ancient enemy, the greater confuſions which they experienced at home obliged them quickly to accommodate matters; and Charles, content with recovering his daughter from Henry's hands, laid aſide his preparations, and renewed the truce between the kingdoms[r]. The attack of Guienne was alſo an inviting attempt, which the preſent factions that prevailed among the French obliged them to neglect. The Gaſcons, affectionate to the memory of Richard, who was born among them, refuſed to ſwear allegiance to a prince that had dethroned and murdered him; and the appearance of a French army on their frontiers would probably have tempted them to change maſters[s]. But the earl of Worceſter, arriving with ſome Engliſh troops, gave countenance to the partiſans of Henry, and overawed their opponents. Religion too was here found a cement to their union with England. The Gaſcons had been engaged, by Richard's authority, to acknowledge the pope of Rome; and they were ſenſible, that if they ſubmitted to France, it would be neceſſary for them to pay obedience to the pope of Avignon, whom they had been taught to deteſt as a ſchiſmatic. Their principles on this head were too faſt rooted to admit of any ſudden or violent alteration.

Inſurrection in Wales.

THE revolution in England proved likewiſe the occaſion of an inſurrection in Wales. Owen Glendour, or Glendourduy, deſcended from the ancient princes of that country, had become obnoxious on account of his attachment to Richard; and Reginald lord Gray of Ruthyn, who was cloſely connected with the new king, and who enjoyed a great fortune in the marches of Wales, thought the opportunity favourable for oppreſſing his neighbour,

[r] Rymer, vol. viii. p. 142. 152. 219.
[s] Ibid. p. 110, 111.

and

and taking poſſeſſion of his eſtate[t]. Glendour, provoked at the injuſtice, and ſtill more at the indignity, recovered poſſeſſion by the ſword[u]: Henry ſent aſſiſtance to Gray[w]; the Welſh took part with Glendour: A troubleſome and tedious war was kindled, which Glendour long ſuſtained by his valour and activity, aided by the natural ſtrength of the country, and the untamed ſpirit of its inhabitants. CHAP. XVIII. 1401.

As Glendour committed devaſtations promiſcuouſly on all the Engliſh, he infeſted the eſtate of the earl of Marche; and ſir Edmund Mortimer, uncle to that nobleman, led out the retainers of the family, and gave battle to the Welſh chieftain: His troops were routed, and he was taken priſoner[x]: At the ſame time the earl himſelf, who had been allowed to retire to his caſtle of Wigmore, and who, though a mere boy, took the field with his followers, fell alſo into Glendour's hands, and was carried by him into Wales[y]. As Henry dreaded and hated all the family of Marche, he allowed the earl to remain in captivity; and though that young nobleman was nearly allied to the Piercies, to whoſe aſſiſtance he himſelf had owed his crown, he refuſed to the earl of Northumberland permiſſion to treat of his ranſom with Glendour.

THE uncertainty in which Henry's affairs ſtood during a long time with France, as well as the confuſions incident to all great changes in government, tempted the Scots to make incurſions into England; and Henry, deſirous of taking revenge upon them, but afraid of rendering his new government unpopular by requiring great ſupplies from his ſubjects, ſummoned at Weſtminſter a council of the peers, without the commons, and laid before them the ſtate of his affairs[z]. The military part of the feudal

[t] Vita Ric. Sec. p. 171, 172.
[u] Walſingham, p. 364.
[w] Vita Ric. Sec. p. 172, 173.
[x] Dugdale, vol. i. p. 150.
[y] Ibid. vol. i. p. 151.
[z] Rymer, vol. viii. p. 125, 126.

CHAP. XVIII.

1401. conſtitution was now much decayed: There remained only ſo much of that fabric as affected the civil rights and properties of men: And the peers here undertook, but voluntarily, to attend the king in an expedition againſt Scotland, each of them at the head of a certain number of his retainers [a]. Henry conducted this army to Edinburgh, of which he eaſily made himſelf maſter; and he there ſummoned Robert III. to do homage to him for his crown [b]. But finding that the Scots would neither ſubmit nor give him battle, he returned in three weeks, after making this uſeleſs bravado; and he diſbanded his army.

1402. In the ſubſequent ſeaſon, Archibald earl of Douglas, at the head of 12,000 men, and attended by many of the principal nobility of Scotland, made an irruption into England, and committed devaſtations on the northern counties. On his return home, he was overtaken by the Piercies at Homeldon, on the borders of England, and a fierce battle enſued, where the Scots were totally routed. Douglas himſelf was taken priſoner; as was Mordac earl of Fife, ſon of the duke of Albany, and nephew of the Scottiſh king, with the earls of Angus, Murray, and Orkney, and many others of the gentry and nobility [c]. When Henry received intelligence of this victory, he ſent the earl of Northumberland orders not to ranſom his priſoners, which that nobleman regarded as his right by the laws of war received in that age. The king intended to detain them, that he might be able, by their means, to make an advantageous peace with Scotland; but by this policy he gave a freſh diſguſt to the family of Piercy.

The obligations which Henry had owed to Northumberland were of a kind the moſt likely to pro-

[a] Rymer, vol. viii. p. 125. [b] Ibid. p. 155, 156, &c.
[c] Walſingham, p. 366. Vita Ric. Sec. p. 180. Chron. Otterbourne, p. 237.

duce ingratitude on the one side, and discontent on the other. The sovereign naturally became jealous of that power which had advanced him to the throne; and the subject was not easily satisfied in the returns which he thought so great a favour had merited. Though Henry, on his accession, had bestowed the office of constable on Northumberland for life [d], and conferred other gifts on that family, these favours were regarded as their due; the refusal of any other request was deemed an injury. The impatient spirit of Harry Piercy, and the factious disposition of the earl of Worcester, younger brother of Northumberland, inflamed the discontents of that nobleman; and the precarious title of Henry tempted him to seek revenge, by overturning that throne which he had at first established. He entered into a correspondence with Glendour; He gave liberty to the earl of Douglas, and made an alliance with that martial chief: He roused up all his partisans to arms; and such unlimited authority at that time belonged to the great families, that the same men, whom a few years before, he had conducted against Richard, now followed his standard in opposition to Henry. When war was ready to break out, Northumberland was seized with a sudden illness at Berwic; and young Piercy, taking the command of the troops, marched towards Shrewsbury, in order to join his forces with those of Glendour. The king had happily a small army on foot, with which he had intended to act against the Scots; and knowing the importance of celerity in all civil wars, he instantly hurried down, that he might give battle to the rebels. He approached Piercy near Shrewsbury, before that nobleman was joined by Glendour; and the policy of one leader, and impatience of the other, made them hasten to a general engagement.

CHAP. XVIII.

1403. The earl of Northumberland rebels.

[d] Rymer, vol. viii. p. 89.

CHAP. XVIII. 1403.

THE evening before the battle, Piercy ſent a manifeſto to Henry, in which he renounced his allegiance, ſet that prince at defiance, and, in the name of his father and uncle, as well as his own, enumerated all the grievances of which, he pretended, the nation had reaſon to complain. He upbraided him with the perjury of which he had been guilty, when on landing at Ravenſpur, he had ſworn upon the goſpels, before the earl of Northumberland, that he had no other intention than to recover the dutchy of Lancaſter, and that he would ever remain a faithful ſubject to king Richard. He aggravated his guilt in firſt dethroning, then murdering that prince, and in uſurping on the title of the houſe of Mortimer, to whom, both by lineal ſucceſſion, and by declarations of parliament, the throne, when vacant by Richard's demiſe, did of right belong. He complained of his cruel policy in allowing the young earl of Marche, whom he ought to regard as his ſovereign, to remain a captive in the hands of his enemies, and in even refuſing to all his friends permiſſion to treat of his ranſom. He charged him again with perjury in loading the nation with heavy taxes, after having ſworn that, without the utmoſt neceſſity, he would never levy any impoſitions upon them. And he reproached him with the arts employed in procuring favourable elections into parliament; arts which he himſelf had before imputed as a crime to Richard, and which he had made one chief reaſon of that prince's arraignment and depoſition[e]. This manifeſto was well calculated to inflame the quarrel between the parties: The bravery of the two leaders promiſed an obſtinate engagement: And the equality of the armies, being each about 12,000 men, a number which was not unmanageable by the com-

[e] Hall, fol. 21, 22, &c.

manders,

manders, gave reaſon to expect a great effuſion of blood on both ſides, and a very doubtful iſſue to the combat. CHAP. XVIII. 1403.

We ſhall ſcarcely find any battle in thoſe ages where the ſhock was more terrible and more conſtant. Henry expoſed his perſon in the thickeſt of the fight: His gallant ſon, whoſe military atchievements were afterwards ſo renowned, and who here performed his noviciate in arms, ſignalized himſelf on his father's footſteps, and even a wound, which he received in the face with an arrow, could not oblige him to quit the field [f]. Piercy ſupported that fame which he had acquired in many a bloody combat: And Douglas, his ancient enemy, and now his friend, ſtill appeared his rival, amidſt the horror and confuſion of the day. This nobleman performed feats of valour which are almoſt incredible: He ſeemed determined that the king of England ſhould that day fall by his arm: He ſought him all over the field of battle: And as Henry, either to elude the attacks of the enemy upon his perſon, or to encourage his own men by the belief of his preſence every where, had accoutred ſeveral captains in the royal garb, the ſword of Douglas rendered this honour fatal to many [g]. But while the armies were contending in this furious manner, the death of Piercy, by an unknown hand, decided the victory, and the royaliſts prevailed. There are ſaid to have fallen that day, on both ſides, near two thouſand three hundred gentlemen; but the perſons of greateſt diſtinction were on the king's; the earl of Stafford, ſir Hugh Shirley, ſir Nicholas Gauſel, ſir Hugh Mortimer, ſir John Maſſey, ſir John Calverly. About ſix thouſand private men periſhed, of whom two thirds were of Piercy's army [h]. The earls of Worceſter and Douglas were taken priſoners: The former was beheaded at Shrewſ- 21ſt July. Battle of Shrewſbury.

[f] T. Livii, p. 3. [g] Walſingham, p. 366, 367. Hall, fol. 22.
[h] Chron. Otterbourne, p. 224. Ypod. Neuſt. p. 560.

CHAP. XVII.

bury; the latter was treated with the courtesy due to his rank and merit.

1403. THE earl of Northumberland, having recovered from his sickness, had levied a fresh army, and was on his march to join his son; but being opposed by the earl of Westmoreland, and hearing of the defeat at Shrewsbury, he dismissed his forces, and came with a small retinue to the king at York[i]. He pretended that his sole intention in arming was to mediate between the parties: Henry thought proper to accept of the apology, and even granted him a pardon for his offence: All the other rebels were treated with equal lenity; and, except the earl of Worcester and sir Richard Vernon, who were regarded as the chief authors of the insurrection, no person engaged in this dangerous enterprise seems to have perished by the hands of the executioner[k].

1405. BUT Northumberland, though he had been pardoned, knew that he never should be trusted, and that he was too powerful to be cordially forgiven by a prince whose situation gave him such reasonable grounds of jealousy. It was the effect either of Henry's vigilance or good fortune, or of the narrow genius of his enemies, that no proper concert was ever formed among them: They rose in rebellion one after another; and thereby afforded him an opportunity of suppressing singly those insurrections, which, had they been united, might have proved fatal to his authority. The earl of Nottingham, son of the duke of Norfolk, and the archbishop of York, brother to the earl of Wiltshire, whom Henry, then duke of Lancaster, had beheaded at Bristol, though they had remained quiet while Piercy was in the field, still harboured in their breast a violent hatred against the enemy of their families; and they determined, in conjunction with the earl of Northumberland, to seek revenge against him. They betook

[i] Chron. Otterbourne, p. 225. [k] Rymer, vol. viii. p. 353.

themselves

themſelves to arms before that powerful nobleman was prepared to join them; and publiſhing a manifeſto, in which they reproached Henry with his uſurpation of the crown, and the murder of the late king, they required that the right line ſhould be reſtored, and all public grievances be redreſſed. The earl of Weſtmoreland, whoſe power lay in the neighbourhood, approached them with an inferior force at Shipton, near York; and, being afraid to hazard an action, he attempted to ſubdue them by a ſtratagem, which nothing but the greateſt folly and ſimplicity on their part could have rendered ſucceſsful. He deſired a conference with the archbiſhop and earl between the armies: He heard their grievances with great patience: He begged them to propoſe the remedies: He approved of every expedient which they ſuggeſted: He granted them all their demands: He alſo engaged that Henry ſhould give them entire ſatisfaction; and when he ſaw them pleaſed with the facility of his conceſſions, he obſerved to them, that ſince amity was now, in effect, reſtored between them, it were better on both ſides to diſmiſs their forces, which otherwiſe would prove an inſupportable burden to the country. The archbiſhop and the earl of Nottingham immediately gave directions to that purpoſe: Their troops diſbanded upon the field: But Weſtmoreland, who had ſecretly iſſued contrary orders to *his* army, ſeized the two rebels without reſiſtance, and carried them to the king, who was advancing with haſty marches to ſuppreſs the inſurrection [1]. The trial and puniſhment of an archbiſhop might have proved a troubleſome and dangerous undertaking, had Henry proceeded regularly, and allowed time for an oppoſition to form itſelf againſt that unuſual meaſure: The celerity of the execution alone could here render it ſafe and prudent. Finding that ſir William Gaſcoigne, the chief

CHAP. XVIII. 1405.

[1] Walſingham, p. 373. Otterbourne, p. 255.

juſtice,

CHAP. XVIII. 1405. juſtice, made ſome ſcruple of acting on this occaſion, he appointed ſir William Fulthorpe for judge; who, without any indictment, trial, or defence, pronounced ſentence of death upon the prelate, which was preſently executed. This was the firſt inſtance in England of a capital puniſhment inflicted on a biſhop; whence the clergy of that rank might learn that their crimes, more than thoſe of laics, were not to paſs with impunity. The earl of Nottingham was condemned and executed in the ſame ſummary manner: But though many other perſons of condition, ſuch as lord Falconberg, ſir Ralph Haſtings, ſir John Colville, were engaged in this rebellion, no others ſeem to have fallen victims to Henry's ſeverity.

THE earl of Northumberland, on receiving this intelligence, fled into Scotland, together with lord Bardolf[l]; and the king, without oppoſition, reduced all the caſtles and fortreſſes belonging to theſe noblemen. He thence turned his arms againſt Glendour, over whom his ſon, the prince of Wales, had obtained ſome advantages: But that enemy, more troubleſome than dangerous, ſtill found means of defending himſelf in his faſtneſſes, and of eluding, 1407. though not reſiſting, all the force of England. In a ſubſequent ſeaſon, the earl of Northumberland and lord Bardolf, impatient of their exile, entered the north, in hopes of raiſing the people to arms; but found the country in ſuch a poſture as rendered all their attempts unſucceſsful. Sir Thomas Rokeſby, ſheriff of Yorkſhire, levied ſome forces, attacked the invaders at Bramham, and gained a victory, in which both Northumberland and Bardolf were ſlain[m]. This proſperous event, joined to the death of Glendour, which happened ſoon after, freed Henry from all his domeſtic enemies; and this prince, who had mounted the throne by ſuch unjuſtifiable means, and held it

[l] Walſingham, p. 374. [m] Ibid. p. 377. Chron. Otterb. p. 261.

by

by such an exceptionable title, had yet, by his valour, prudence, and address, accustomed the people to the yoke, and had obtained a greater ascendant over his haughty barons than the law alone, not supported by these active qualities, was ever able to confer. CHAP. XVIII. 1407.

About the same time, fortune gave Henry an advantage over that neighbour, who, by his situation, was most enabled to disturb his government. Robert III. king of Scots, was a prince, though of slender capacity, extremely innocent and inoffensive in his conduct: But Scotland, at that time, was still less fitted than England for cherishing, or even enduring sovereigns of that character. The duke of Albany, Robert's brother, a prince of more abilities, at least of a more boisterous and violent disposition, had assumed the government of the state; and, not satisfied with present authority, he entertained the criminal purpose of extirpating his brother's children, and of acquiring the crown to his own family. He threw in prison David, his eldest nephew, who there perished by hunger: James alone, the younger brother of David, stood between that tyrant and the throne; and king Robert, sensible of his son's danger, embarked him on board a ship, with a view of sending him to France, and entrusting him to the protection of that friendly power. Unfortunately, the vessel was taken by the English; prince James, a boy about nine years of age, was carried to London; and though there subsisted at that time a truce between the kingdoms, Henry refused to restore the young prince to his liberty. Robert, worn out with cares and infirmities, was unable to bear the shock of this last misfortune; and he soon after died, leaving the government in the hands of the duke of Albany[o]. Henry was now more sensible than ever of the importance of the acquisition which he had made: While he retained such a pledge, he was sure of keep-

[o] Buchanan, lib. 10.

ing

CHAP. XVIII.

ing the duke of Albany in dependance; or, if offended, he could eaſily, by reſtoring the true heir, take ample revenge upon the uſurper. But though the king, by detaining James in the Engliſh court, had ſhown himſelf ſomewhat deficient in generoſity, he made ample amends by giving that prince an excellent education, which afterwards qualified him, when he mounted the throne, to reform, in ſome meaſure, the rude and barbarous manners of his native country.

1407.

THE hoſtile diſpoſitions which of late had prevailed between France and England were reſtrained, during the greater part of this reign, from appearing in action. The jealouſies and civil commotions with which both nations were diſturbed, kept each of them from taking advantage of the unhappy ſituation of its neighbour. But as the abilities and good fortune of Henry had ſooner been able to compoſe the Engliſh factions, this prince began, in the latter part of his reign, to look abroad, and to foment the animoſities between the families of Burgundy and Orleans, by which the government of France was, during that period, ſo much diſtracted. He knew that one great ſource of the national diſcontent againſt his predeceſſor was the inactivity of his reign; and he hoped, by giving a new direction to the reſtleſs and unquiet ſpirits of his people, to prevent their breaking out in domeſtic wars and diſorders. That he might unite policy with force, he firſt entered into treaty with the duke of Burgundy, and ſent that prince a ſmall body of troops, which ſupported him againſt his enemies [p]. Soon after, he hearkened to more advantageous propoſals made him by the duke of Orleans, and diſpatched a greater body to ſupport that party [q]. But the leaders of the oppoſite factions having made temporary accommodation, the intereſts of the Engliſh were ſacrificed; and this effort of

1411.

1412.

[p] Walſingham, p. 380. [q] Rymer, vol. viii. p. 715. 738.

Henry

Henry proved, in the iſſue, entirely vain and fruitleſs. The declining ſtate of his health, and the ſhortneſs of his reign, prevented him from renewing the attempt, which his more fortunate ſon carried to ſo great a length againſt the French monarchy. CHAP. XVIII. 1412.

SUCH were the military and foreign tranſactions of this reign: The civil and parliamentary are ſomewhat more memorable, and more worthy of our attention. During the two laſt reigns, the elections of the commons had appeared a circumſtance of government not to be neglected; and Richard was even accuſed of uſing unwarrantable methods for procuring to his partiſans a ſeat in that houſe. This practice formed one conſiderable article of charge againſt him in his depoſition; yet Henry ſcrupled not to tread in his footſteps, and to encourage the ſame abuſes in elections. Laws were enacted againſt ſuch undue influence, and even a ſheriff was puniſhed for an iniquitous return which he had made[r]: But laws were commonly, at that time, very ill executed; and the liberties of the people, ſuch as they were, ſtood on a ſurer baſis than on laws and parliamentary elections. Though the houſe of commons was little able to withſtand the violent currents which perpetually ran between the monarchy and the ariſtocracy, and though that houſe might eaſily be brought, at a particular time, to make the moſt unwarrantable conceſſions to either; the general inſtitutions of the ſtate ſtill remained invariable; the intereſts of the ſeveral members continued on the ſame footing; the ſword was in the hands of the ſubject; and the government, though thrown into temporary diſorder, ſoon ſettled itſelf on its ancient foundations. Parliamentary tranſactions.

DURING the greater part of this reign, the king was obliged to court popularity; and the houſe of commons, ſenſible of their own importance, began to aſſume powers which had not uſually been exer-

[r] Cotton, p. 429.

ciſed

CHAP. XVIII. 1412.

cised by their predecessors. In the first year of Henry, they procured a law, that no judge, in concurring with any iniquitous measure, should be excused by pleading the orders of the king, or even the danger of his own life from the menaces of the sovereign [s]. In the second year, they insisted on maintaining the practice of not granting any supply before they received an answer to their petitions; which was a tacit manner of bargaining with the prince [t]. In the fifth year, they desired the king to remove from his household four persons who had displeased them, among whom was his own confessor; and Henry, though he told them that he knew of no offence which these men had committed, yet, in order to gratify them, complied with their request [u]. In the sixth year, they voted the king supplies, but appointed treasurers of their own, to see the money disbursed for the purposes intended, and required them to deliver in their accounts to the house [w]. In the eighth year, they proposed, for the regulation of the government and household, thirty important articles, which were all agreed to; and they even obliged all the members of council, all the judges, and all the officers of the household, to swear to the observance of them [x]. The abridger of the records remarks the unusual liberties taken by the speaker and the house during this period [y]. But the great authority of the commons was but a temporary advantage, arising from the present situation. In a subsequent parliament, when the speaker made his customary application to the throne for liberty of speech, the king, having now overcome all his domestic difficulties, plainly told him, that he would have no novelties introduced, and would enjoy his prerogatives. But on the whole, the limitations of the government seem to have been more sensibly felt, and more carefully maintained by Henry, than by any of his predecessors.

[s] Cotton, p. 364. [t] Ibid. p. 406. [u] Ibid. p. 426.
[w] Ibid. p. 438. [x] Ibid. p. 456, 457. [y] Ibid. p. 462.

DURING

CHAP. XVIII.

1412.

DURING this reign, when the houſe of commons were, at any time, brought to make unwary conceſſions to the crown, they alſo ſhewed their freedom by a ſpeedy retractation of them. Henry, though he entertained a perpetual and well-grounded jealouſy of the family of Mortimer, allowed not their name to be once mentioned in parliament; and as none of the rebels had ventured to declare the earl of Marche king, he never attempted to procure, what would not have been refuſed him, an expreſs declaration againſt the claim of that nobleman; becauſe he knew that ſuch a declaration, in the preſent circumſtances, would have no authority, and would only ſerve to revive the memory of Mortimer's title in the minds of the people. He proceeded in his purpoſe after a more artful and covert manner. He procured a ſettlement of the crown on himſelf and his heirs-male [z], thereby tacitly excluding the females, and transferring the Salic law into the Engliſh government. He thought, that though the houſe of Plantagenet had at firſt derived their title from a female, this was a remote event, unknown to the generality of the people; and if he could once accuſtom them to the practice of excluding women, the title of the earl of Marche would gradually be forgotten and neglected by them. But he was very unfortunate in this attempt. During the long conteſts with France, the injuſtice of the Salic law had been ſo much exclaimed againſt by the nation, that a contrary principle had taken deep root in the minds of men; and it was now become impoſſible to eradicate it. The ſame houſe of commons, therefore, in a ſubſequent ſeſſion, apprehenſive that they had overturned the foundations of the Engliſh government, and that they had opened the door to more civil wars than might enſue even from the irregular elevation of the houſe of Lancaſter, applied with ſuch earneſtneſs for

[z] Cotton, p. 434.

a new

CHAP. XVIII.

1412.

a new ſettlement of the crown, that Henry yielded to their requeſt, and agreed to the ſucceſſion of the princeſſes of his family [a]. A certain proof, that nobody was, in his heart, ſatisfied with the king's title to the crown, or knew on what principle to reſt it.

But though the commons, during this reign, ſhowed a laudable zeal for liberty in their tranſactions with the crown; their efforts againſt the church were ſtill more extraordinary, and ſeemed to anticipate very much the ſpirit which became ſo general in a little more than a century afterwards. I know, that the credit of theſe paſſages reſts entirely on one ancient hiſtorian [b]; but that hiſtorian was contemporary, was a clergyman, and it was contrary to the intereſts of his order to preſerve the memory of ſuch tranſactions, much more to forge precedents, which poſterity might, ſome time, be tempted to imitate. This is a truth ſo evident, that the moſt likely way of accounting for the ſilence of the records on this head, is by ſuppoſing, that the authority of ſome churchmen was ſo great as to procure a razure, with regard to theſe circumſtances, which the indiſcretion of one of that order has happily preſerved to us.

In the ſixth of Henry, the commons, who had been required to grant ſupplies, propoſed in plain terms to the king, that he ſhould ſeize all the temporalities of the church, and employ them as a perpetual fund to ſerve the exigencies of the ſtate. They inſiſted, that the clergy poſſeſſed a third of the lands of the kingdom; that they contributed nothing to the public burdens; and that their riches tended only to diſqualify them from performing their miniſterial functions with proper zeal and attention. When this addreſs was preſented, the archbiſhop of Canterbury, who then attended the king, objected

[a] Rymer, vol. viii. p. 462. [b] Walſingham.

that

that the clergy, though they went not in perſon to the wars, ſent their vaſſals and tenants in all caſes of neceſſity; while, at the ſame time, they themſelves, who ſtaid at home, were employed night and day in offering up their prayers for the happineſs and proſperity of the ſtate. The ſpeaker ſmiled, and anſwered, without reſerve, that he thought the prayers of the church but a very ſlender ſupply. The archbiſhop, however, prevailed in the diſpute: The king diſcouraged the application of the commons! And the lords rejected the bill which the lower houſe had framed for ſtripping the church of her revenues [c].

CHAP. XVIII. 1412.

The commons were not diſcouraged by this repulſe: In the eleventh of the king they returned to the charge with more zeal than before: They made a calculation of all the eccleſiaſtical revenues, which, by their account, amounted to 485,000 marks a-year, and contained 18,400 ploughs of land. They propoſed to divide this property among fifteen new earls, 1500 knights, 6000 eſquires, and a hundred hoſpitals; beſides 20,000 pounds a-year, which the king might take for his own uſe: And they inſiſted, that the clerical functions would be better performed than at preſent, by 15,000 pariſh prieſts, paid at the rate of ſeven marks a-piece of yearly ſtipend [d]. This application was accompanied with an addreſs for mitigating the ſtatutes enacted againſt the Lollards, which ſhows from what ſource the addreſs came. The king gave the commons a ſevere reply; and farther to ſatisfy the church, and to prove that he was quite in earneſt, he ordered a Lollard to be burned before the diſſolution of the parliament [e].

We have now related almoſt all the memorable tranſactions of this reign, which was buſy and active; but produced few events that deſerve to be tranſmitted to poſterity. The king was ſo much

[c] Walſingham, p. 371. Ypod. Neuſt. p. 563. [d] Walſingham, p. 379. Tit. Livius. [e] Rymer, vol. viii. p. 627. Otterbourne, p. 267.

CHAP. XVIII. 1413.

employed in defending his crown, which he had obtained by unwarrantable means, and poſſeſſed by a bad title, that he had little leiſure to look abroad, or perform any action which might redound to the honour or advantage of the nation. His health declined ſome months before his death; he was ſubject to fits, which bereaved him, for the time, of his ſenſes: And, though he was yet in the flower of his age, his end was viſibly approaching. He expired at Weſtminſter, in the forty-ſixth year of his age, and the thirteenth of his reign.

20th Mar. Death,

and character of the king.

THE great popularity which Henry enjoyed before he attained the crown, and which had ſo much aided him in the acquiſition of it, was entirely loſt many years before the end of his reign; and he governed his people more by terror than by affection, more by his own policy than by their ſenſe of duty or allegiance. When men came to reflect, in cool blood, on the crimes which had led him to the throne; the rebellion againſt his prince; the depoſition of a lawful king, guilty ſometimes, perhaps, of oppreſſion, but more frequently of indiſcretion; the excluſion of the true heir; the murder of his ſovereign and near relation; theſe were ſuch enormities as drew on him the hatred of his ſubjects, ſanctified all the rebellions againſt him, and made the executions, though not remarkably ſevere, which he found neceſſary for the maintenance of his authority, appear cruel as well as iniquitous to the people. Yet, without pretending to apologize for theſe crimes, which muſt ever be held in deteſtation, it may be remarked, that he was inſenſibly led into this blamable conduct by a train of incidents, which few men poſſeſs virtue enough to withſtand. The injuſtice with which his predeceſſor had treated him, in firſt condemning him to baniſhment, then deſpoiling him of his patrimony, made him naturally think of revenge, and of recovering his loſt rights; the headlong zeal of the people hurried him into the throne; the care of his own ſecurity, as well

well as his ambition, made him an usurper; and the steps have always been so few between the prisons of princes and their graves, that we need not wonder that Richard's fate was no exception to the general rule. All these considerations make Henry's situation, if he retained any sense of virtue, much to be lamented; and the inquietude with which he possessed his envied greatness, and the remorses by which, it is said, he was continually haunted, render him an object of our pity, even when seated upon the throne. But it must be owned, that his prudence and vigilance and foresight, in maintaining his power, were admirable: His command of temper remarkable: His courage, both military and political, without blemish: And he possessed many qualities which fitted him for his high station, and which rendered his usurpation of it, though pernicious in after-times, rather salutary, during his own reign, to the English nation. CHAP. XVIII. 1413.

HENRY was twice married: By his first wife, Mary de Bohun, daughter and co-heir of the earl of Hereford, he had four sons, Henry, his successor in the throne, Thomas, duke of Clarence, John, duke of Bedford, and Humphrey, duke of Gloucester; and two daughters, Blanche and Philippa, the former married to the duke of Bavaria, the latter to the king of Denmark. His second wife, Jane, whom he married after he was king, and who was daughter of the king of Navarre, and widow of the duke of Britanny, brought him no issue.

BY an act of the fifth of this reign, it is made felony to cut out any person's tongue, or put out his eyes; crimes which, the act says, were very frequent. This savage spirit of revenge denotes a barbarous people; though, perhaps, it was increased by the prevailing factions and civil commotions.

COMMERCE was very little understood in this reign, as in all the preceding. In particular, a great jealousy prevailed against *merchant strangers*; and many restraints were, by law, imposed upon them; namely,

CHAP. XVIII. 1413.

that they ſhould lay out in Engliſh manufactures or commodities all the money acquired by the ſale of their goods; that they ſhould not buy or ſell with one another, and that all their goods ſhould be diſpoſed of three months after importation [f]. This laſt clauſe was found ſo inconvenient, that it was ſoon after repealed by parliament.

It appears that the expence of this king's houſehold amounted to the yearly ſum of 19,500l. money of that age [g].

Guicciardin tells us, that the Flemings, in this century, learned from Italy all the refinements in arts, which they taught the reſt of Europe. The progreſs, however, of the arts was ſtill very ſlow and backward in England.

[f] 4 Hen. IV. cap. 15. and 5 Hen. IV. cap. 9.
[g] Rymer, tom. viii. p. 610.

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CHAP. XIX.

HENRY V.

The king's former diſorders——His reformation——The Lollards——Puniſhment of lord Cobham——State of France——Invaſion of that kingdom——Battle of Azincour——State of France——New invaſion of France——Aſſaſſination of the duke of Burgundy——Treaty of Troye——Marriage of the king——His death——and character——Miſcellaneous tranſactions during this reign.

THE many jealouſies to which Henry IV.'s ſituation naturally expoſed him, had ſo infected his temper, that he had entertained unreaſonable ſuſpicions with regard to the fidelity of his eldeſt ſon; and, during the latter years of his life, he had excluded that prince from all ſhare in public buſineſs, and was even diſpleaſed to ſee him at the head of armies, where his martial talents, though uſeful to the ſupport of government, acquired him a renown, which, he thought, might prove dangerous to his own authority. The active ſpirit of young Henry, reſtrained from its proper exerciſe, broke out into extravagancies of every kind; and the riot of pleaſure, the frolic of debauchery, the outrage of wine, filled the vacancies of a mind, better adapted to the purſuits of ambition and the cares of government. This courſe of life threw him among companions, whoſe diſorders, if accompanied with ſpirit and humour, he indulged and ſeconded; and he was detected in many ſallies, which, to ſeverer eyes, appeared totally unworthy of his rank and ſtation. There even remains a tradition, that, when heated

CHAP. XIX.

1413. The king's former diſorders.

CHAP. XIX. 1413.

with liquor and jollity, he ſcrupled not to accompany his riotous aſſociates in attacking the paſſengers on the ſtreets and highways, and deſpoiling them of their goods; and he found an amuſement in the incidents which the terror and regret of theſe defenceleſs people produced on ſuch occaſions. This extreme of diſſoluteneſs proved equally diſagreeable to his father, as that eager application to buſineſs which had at firſt given him occaſion of jealouſy; and he ſaw, in his ſon's behaviour, the ſame neglect of decency, the ſame attachment to low company, which had degraded the perſonal character of Richard, and which, more than all his errors in government, had tended to overturn his throne. But the nation, in general, conſidered the young prince with more indulgence; and obſerved ſo many gleams of generoſity, ſpirit, and magnanimity, breaking continually through the cloud which a wild conduct threw over his character, that they never ceaſed hoping for his amendment; and they aſcribed all the weeds, which ſhot up in that rich ſoil, to the want of proper culture and attention in the king and his miniſters. There happened an incident which encouraged theſe agreeable views, and gave much occaſion for favourable reflections to all men of ſenſe and candour. A riotous companion of the prince's had been indicted before Gaſcoigne, the chief juſtice, for ſome diſorders; and Henry was not aſhamed to appear at the bar with the criminal, in order to give him countenance and protection. Finding that his preſence had not overawed the chief juſtice, he proceeded to inſult that magiſtrate on his tribunal; but Gaſcoigne, mindful of the character which he then bore, and the majeſty of the ſovereign and of the laws, which he ſuſtained, ordered the prince to be carried to priſon for his rude behaviour[h]. The ſpectators were agreeably diſappointed when they

[h] Hall, fol. 33.

ſaw

saw the heir of the crown submit peaceably to this sentence, make reparation for his error by acknowledging it, and check his impetuous nature in the midst of its extravagant career.

CHAP. XIX. 1413.

His reformation.

The memory of this incident, and of many others of a like nature, rendered the prospect of the future reign, nowise disagreeable to the nation, and increased the joy which the death of so unpopular a prince as the late king naturally occasioned. The first steps taken by the young prince confirmed all those prepossessions entertained in his favour [i]. He called together his former companions, acquainted them with his intended reformation, exhorted them to imitate his example, but strictly inhibited them, till they had given proofs of their sincerity in this particular, from appearing any more in his presence; and he thus dismissed them with liberal presents [k]. The wise ministers of his father, who had checked his riots, found that they had unknowingly been paying the highest court to him; and were received with all the marks of favour and confidence. The chief justice himself, who trembled to approach the royal presence, met with praises instead of reproaches for his past conduct, and was exhorted to persevere in the same rigorous and impartial execution of the laws. The surprise of those who expected an opposite behaviour, augmented their satisfaction; and the character of the young king appeared brighter than if it had never been shaded by any errors.

But Henry was anxious not only to repair his own misconduct, but also to make amends for those iniquities into which policy or the necessity of affairs had betrayed his father. He expressed the deepest sorrow for the fate of the unhappy Richard, did justice to the memory of that unfortunate prince, even performed his funeral obsequies with pomp and solemnity, and cherished all those who had

[i] Walsing. p. 382. [k] Hall, fol. 33. Holingshed, p. 543. Godwin's Life of Henry V. p. 1.

CHAP. XIX. 1413.

distinguished themselves by their loyalty and attachment towards him [l]. Instead of continuing the restraints which the jealousy of his father had imposed on the earl of Marche, he received that young nobleman with singular courtesy and favour; and by this magnanimity, so gained on the gentle and unambitious nature of his competitor, that he remained ever after sincerely attached to him, and gave him no disturbance in his future government. The family of Piercy was restored to its fortune and honours [m]. The king seemed ambitious to bury all party-distinctions in oblivion: The instruments of the preceding reign, who had been advanced from their blind zeal for the Lancastrian interests, more than from their merits, gave place every where to men of more honourable characters: Virtue seemed now to have an open career, in which it might exert itself: The exhortations, as well as example, of the prince gave it encouragement: All men were unanimous in their attachment to Henry; and the defects of his title were forgotten amidst the personal regard which was universally paid to him.

The Lollards.

There remained among the people only one party distinction, which was derived from religious differences, and which, as it is of a peculiar, and commonly a very obstinate nature, the popularity of Henry was not able to overcome. The Lollards were every day increasing in the kingdom, and were become a formed party, which appeared extremely dangerous to the church, and even formidable to the civil authority [n]. The enthusiasm by which these sectaries were generally actuated, the great alterations which they pretended to introduce, the hatred which they expressed against the established hierarchy, gave an alarm to Henry; who, either from a sincere attachment to the ancient religion, or from a dread of the unknown consequences which attend

[l] Hist. Croyland. contin. Hall, fol. 34. Holingshed, p. 544.
[m] Holingshed, p. 545. [n] Walsingham, p. 382.

all

all important changes, was determined to execute the laws against such bold innovators. The head of this sect was sir John Oldcastle, lord Cobham, a nobleman who had distinguished himself by his valour and his military talents, and had, on many occasions, acquired the esteem both of the late and of the present king [o]. His high character and his zeal for the new sect pointed him out to Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, as the proper victim of ecclesiastical severity; whose punishment would strike a terror into the whole party, and teach them that they must expect no mercy under the present administration. He applied to Henry for a permission to indict lord Cobham [p]; but the generous nature of the prince was averse to such sanguinary methods of conversion. He represented to the primate, that reason and conviction were the best expedients for supporting truth; that all gentle means ought first to be tried in order to reclaim men from error; and that he himself would endeavour, by a conversation with Cobham, to reconcile him to the catholic faith. But he found that nobleman obstinate in his opinions, and determined not to sacrifice truths of such infinite moment to his complaisance for sovereigns [q]. Henry's principles of toleration, or rather his love of the practice, could carry him no farther; and he then gave full reins to ecclesiastical severity against the inflexible heresiarch. The primate indicted Cobham; and, with the assistance of his three suffragans, the bishops of London, Winchester, and St. David's, condemned him to the flames for his erroneous opinions. Cobham, who was confined in the Tower, made his escape before the day appointed for his execution. The bold spirit of the man, provoked by persecution and stimulated by zeal, was urged to attempt the most criminal enterprises; and his unlimited authority

CHAP. XIX. 1413.

[o] Walsingham, p. 382. [p] Fox's Acts and Monuments, p. 513.
[q] Rymer, vol. ix. p. 61. Walsingham, p. 383.

CHAP. XIX.

over the new sect proved that he well merited the attention of the civil magistrate. He formed in his retreat very violent designs against his enemies; and dispatching his emissaries to all quarters, appointed a general rendezvous of the party, in order to seize the person of the king at Eltham, and put their persecutors to the sword [r]. Henry, apprized of their intention, removed to Westminster: Cobham was not discouraged by this disappointment, but changed the place of rendezvous to the field near St. Giles's: The king, having shut the gates of the city, to prevent any reinforcement to the Lollards from that quarter, came into the field in the night-time, seized such of the conspirators as appeared, and afterwards laid hold of the several parties who were hastening to the place appointed. It appeared that a few only were in the secret of the conspiracy: The rest implicitly followed their leaders: But upon the trial of the prisoners, the treasonable designs of the sect were rendered certain, both from evidence, and from the confession of the criminals themselves [s]. Some were executed; the greater number pardoned [t]. Cobham himself, who made his escape by flight, was not brought to justice till four years after, when he was hanged as a traitor; and his body was burnt on the gibbet, in execution of the sentence pronounced against him as a heretic [u]. This criminal design, which was perhaps somewhat aggravated by the clergy, brought discredit upon the party, and checked the progress of that sect, which had embraced the speculative doctrines of Wickliffe, and at the same time aspired to a reformation of ecclesiastical abuses.

1413.

1414. 6th Jan.

Punishment of lord Cobham.

These two points were the great objects of the Lollards; but the bulk of the nation was not affected in the same degree by both of them. Com-

[r] Walsingham, p. 385. [s] Cotton, p. 554. Hall, fol. 35. Holingshed, p. 544. [t] Rymer, vol. ix. p. 119. 129. 193. [u] Walsingham, p. 400. Otterbourne, p. 276. Holingshed, p. 561.

mon

mon ſenſe and obvious reflection had diſcovered to the people the advantages of a reformation in diſcipline; but the age was not yet ſo far advanced as to be ſeized with the ſpirit of controverſy, or to enter into thoſe abſtruſe doctrines which the Lollards endeavoured to propagate throughout the kingdom. The very notion of hereſy alarmed the generality of the people: Innovation in fundamental principles was ſuſpicious: Curioſity was not, as yet, a ſufficient counterpoize to authority: And even many, who were the greateſt friends to the reformation of abuſes, were anxious to expreſs their deteſtation of the ſpeculative tenets of the Wickliffites, which, they feared, threw diſgrace on ſo good a cauſe. This turn of thought appears evidently in the proceedings of the parliament which was ſummoned immediately after the detection of Cobham's conſpiracy. That aſſembly paſſed ſevere laws againſt the new heretics: They enacted, that whoever was convicted of Lollardy, before the ordinary, beſides ſuffering capital puniſhment according to the laws formerly eſtabliſhed, ſhould alſo forfeit his lands and goods to the king; and that the chancellor, treaſurer, juſtices of the two benches, ſheriffs, juſtices of the peace, and all the chief magiſtrates, in every city and borough, ſhould take an oath to uſe their utmoſt endeavours for the extirpation of hereſy [w]. Yet this very parliament, when the king demanded ſupply, renewed the offer formerly preſſed upon his father, and entreated him to ſeize all the eccleſiaſtical revenues, and convert them to the uſe of the crown [x]. The clergy were alarmed: They could offer the king no bribe which was equivalent: They only agreed to confer on him all the priories alien, which depended on capital abbies in Normandy, and had been bequeathed to theſe abbies, when that province remained united to England: And Chicheley, now

CHAP. XIX. 1414.

[w] 2 Hen. V. chap. 7. [x] Hall, fol. 35.

archbiſhop

CHAP. XIX. 1414. archbiſhop of Canterbury, endeavoured to divert the blow, by giving occupation to the king, and by perſuading him to undertake a war againſt France, in order to recover his loſt rights to that kingdom[y].

It was the dying injunction of the late king to his ſon, not to allow the Engliſh to remain long in peace, which was apt to breed inteſtine commotions; but to employ them in foreign expeditions, by which the prince might acquire honour; the nobility, in ſharing his dangers, might attach themſelves to his perſon; and all the reſtleſs ſpirits find occupation for their inquietude. The natural diſpoſition of Henry ſufficiently inclined him to follow this advice, and the civil diſorders of France, which had been prolonged beyond thoſe of England, opened a full career to his ambition.

1415. State of France. The death of Charles V. which followed ſoon after that of Edward III. and the youth of his ſon, Charles VI. put the two kingdoms for ſome time in a ſimilar ſituation; and it was not to be apprehended, that either of them, during a minority, would be able to make much advantage of the weakneſs of the other. The jealouſies alſo between Charles's three uncles, the dukes of Anjou, Berri, and Burgundy, had diſtracted the affairs of France rather more than thoſe between the dukes of Lancaſter, York, and Gloceſter, Richard's three uncles, diſordered thoſe of England; and had carried off the attention of the French nation from any vigorous enterpriſe againſt foreign ſtates. But in proportion as Charles advanced in years, the factions were compoſed; his two uncles, the dukes of Anjou and Burgundy, died; and the king himſelf, aſſuming the reins of government, diſcovered ſymptoms of genius and ſpirit, which revived the drooping hopes of his country. This promiſing ſtate of affairs was not of long duration: The unhappy

[y] Hall, fol. 35, 36.

prince

prince fell suddenly into a fit of frenzy, which rendered him incapable of exercising his authority; and though he recovered from this disorder, he was so subject to relapses, that his judgment was gradually but sensibly impaired; and no steady plan of government could be pursued by him. The administration of affairs was disputed between his brother, Lewis duke of Orleans, and his cousin-german, John duke of Burgundy: The propinquity to the crown pleaded in favour of the former: The latter, who, in right of his mother, had inherited the county of Flanders, which he annexed to his father's extensive dominions, derived a lustre from his superior power: The people were divided between these contending princes: And the king, now resuming, now dropping his authority, kept the victory undecided, and prevented any regular settlement of the state by the final prevalence of either party. CHAP. XIX. 1415.

At length, the dukes of Orleans and Burgundy, seeming to be moved by the cries of the nation and by the interposition of common friends, agreed to bury all past quarrels in oblivion, and to enter into strict amity: They swore before the altar the sincerity of their friendship; the priest administered the sacrament to both of them; they gave to each other every pledge which could be deemed sacred among men: But all this solemn preparation was only a cover for the basest treachery, which was deliberately premeditated by the duke of Burgundy. He procured his rival to be assassinated in the streets of Paris: He endeavoured for some time to conceal the part which he took in the crime: But being detected, he embraced a resolution still more criminal and more dangerous to society, by openly avowing and justifying it[z]. The parliament itself of Paris, the tribunal of justice, heard the harangues of the duke's advocate in defence of assassination, which he

[z] La Labourcur, liv. xxvii. chap. 23, 24.

termed

CHAP. XIX. 1415.

termed tyrannicide; and that assembly, partly influenced by faction, partly overawed by power, pronounced no sentence of condemnation against this detestable doctrine[a]. The same question was afterwards agitated before the council of Constance; and it was with difficulty that a feeble decision, in favour of the contrary opinion, was procured from these fathers of the church, the ministers of peace and of religion. But the mischievous effects of that tenet, had they been before anywise doubtful, appeared sufficiently from the present incidents. The commission of this crime, which destroyed all trust and security, rendered the war implacable between the French parties, and cut off every means of peace and accommodation. The princes of the blood, combining with the young duke of Orleans and his brothers, made violent war on the duke of Burgundy; and the unhappy king, seized sometimes by one party, sometimes by the other, transferred alternately to each of them the appearance of legal authority. The provinces were laid waste by mutual depredations: Assassinations were every where committed from the animosity of the several leaders; or, what was equally terrible, executions were ordered, without any legal or free trial, by pretended courts of judicature. The whole kingdom was distinguished into two parties, the Burgundians and the Armagnacs; so the adherents of the young duke of Orleans were called, from the count of Armagnac, father-in-law to that prince. The city of Paris, distracted between them, but inclining more to the Burgundians, was a perpetual scene of blood and violence; the king and royal family were often detained captives in the hands of the populace; their faithful ministers were butchered or imprisoned before their face; and it was dangerous for any man, amidst these enraged factions, to be distinguished by

[a] La Laboureur, liv. xxvii. chap. 27. Monstrelet, chap. 39.

a ſtrict adherence to the principles of probity and honour. CHAP. XIX.

1415.

During this ſcene of general violence, there roſe into ſome conſideration a body of men, which uſually makes no figure in public tranſactions even during the moſt peaceful times; and that was the univerſity of Paris, whoſe opinion was ſometimes demanded, and more frequently offered, in the multiplied diſputes between the parties. The ſchiſm, by which the church was at that time divided, and which occaſioned frequent controverſies in the univerſity, had raiſed the profeſſors to an unuſual degree of importance; and this connection between literature and ſuperſtition had beſtowed on the former a weight, to which reaſon and knowledge are not, of themſelves, any wiſe entitled among men. But there was another ſociety whoſe ſentiments were much more deciſive at Paris, the fraternity of butchers, who, under the direction of their ringleaders, had declared for the duke of Burgundy, and committed the moſt violent outrages againſt the oppoſite party. To counterbalance their power, the Armagnacs made intereſt with the fraternity of carpenters; the populace ranged themſelves on one ſide or the other; and the fate of the capital depended on the prevalence of either party.

The advantage which might be made of theſe confuſions, was eaſily perceived in England; and according to the maxims which uſually prevail among nations, it was determined to lay hold of the favourable opportunity. The late king, who was courted by both the French parties, fomented the quarrel, by alternately ſending aſſiſtance to each; but the preſent ſovereign, impelled by the vigour of youth and the ardour of ambition, determined to puſh his advantages to a greater length, and to carry violent war into that diſtracted kingdom. But while he was making preparations for this end, he tried to effect his purpoſe by negociation; and he ſent

CHAP. XIX. 1415.

sent over ambassadors to Paris, offering a perpetual peace and alliance; but demanding Catharine, the French king's daughter, in marriage, two millions of crowns as her portion, one million six hundred thousand as the arrears of king John's ransom, and the immediate possession and full sovereignty of Normandy, and of all the other provinces which had been ravished from England by the arms of Philip Augustus; together with the superiority of Britanny and Flanders [b]. Such exorbitant demands show that he was sensible of the present miserable condition of France; and the terms offered by the French court, though much inferior, discover their consciousness of the same melancholy truth. They were willing to give him the princess in marriage, to pay him eight hundred thousand crowns, to resign the entire sovereignty of Guienne, and to annex to that province the country of Perigord, Rovergue, Xaintonge, the Angoumois, and other territories [c]. As Henry rejected these conditions, and scarcely hoped that his own demands would be complied with, he never intermitted a moment his preparations for war; and having assembled a great fleet and army at Southampton, having invited all the nobility and military men of the kingdom to attend him by the hopes of glory and of conquest, he came to the sea-side, with a purpose of embarking on his expedition.

But while Henry was meditating conquests upon his neighbours, he unexpectedly found himself in danger from a conspiracy at home, which was happily detected in its infancy. The earl of Cambridge, second son of the late duke of York, having

[b] Rymer, vol. ix. p. 208.

[c] Ibid. p. 211. It is reported by some historians (See Hist. Croy). Cont. p. 500.) that the Dauphin, in derision of Henry's claims and dissolute character, sent him a box of tennis balls, intimating that these implements of play were better adapted to him than the instruments of war. But this story is by no means credible; the great offers made by the court of France show that they had already entertained a just idea of Henry's character, as well as of their own situation.

espoused

CHAP. XIX. 1415.

eſpouſed the ſiſter of the earl of Marche, had zealouſly embraced the intereſts of that family; and had held ſome conferences with lord Scrope of Maſham, and ſir Thomas Grey of Heton, about the means of recovering to that nobleman his right to the crown of England. The conſpirators, as ſoon as detected, acknowledged their guilt to the king [d]; and Henry proceeded without delay to their trial and condemnation. The utmoſt that could be expected of the beſt king in thoſe ages, was, that he would ſo far obſerve the eſſentials of juſtice, as not to make an innocent perſon a victim to his ſeverity: But as to the formalities of law, which are often as material as the eſſentials themſelves, they were ſacrificed without ſcruple to the leaſt intereſt or convenience. A jury of commoners was ſummoned: The three conſpirators were indicted before them: The conſtable of Southampton caſtle ſwore that they had ſeparately confeſſed their guilt to him: Without other evidence, ſir Thomas Grey was condemned and executed: But as the earl of Cambridge and lord Scrope pleaded the privilege of their peerage, Henry thought proper to ſummon a court of eighteen barons, in which the duke of Clarence preſided: The evidence given before the jury was read to them: The priſoners, though one of them was a prince of the blood, were not examined, nor produced in court, nor heard in their own defence; but received ſentence of death upon this proof, which was every way irregular and unſatisfactory; and the ſentence was ſoon after executed. The earl of Marche was accuſed of having given his approbation to the conſpiracy, and received a general pardon from the king [e]. He was probably either innocent of the crime imputed to

[d] Rymer, vol. ix. p. 300. T. Liv. p. 8.
[e] Rymer, vol. ix. p. 303.

CHAP. XIX.

him, or had made reparation by his early repentance and discovery [f].

1415. Invasion of France.

The successes which the arms of England have, in different ages, obtained over those of France, have been much owing to the favourable situation of the former kingdom. The English, happily seated in an island, could make advantage of every misfortune which attended their neighbours, and were little exposed to the danger of reprisals. They never left their own country but when they were conducted by a king of extraordinary genius, or found their enemy divided by intestine factions, or were supported by a powerful alliance on the continent; and as all these circumstances concurred at present to favour their enterprise, they had reason to expect from it proportionable success. The duke of Burgundy, expelled France by a combination of the princes, had been secretly soliciting the alliance of England [g]; and Henry knew that this prince, though he scrupled at first to join the inveterate enemy of his country, would willingly, if he saw any probability of success, both assist him with his Flemish subjects, and draw over to the same side all his numerous partisans in France. Trusting therefore to this circumstance, but without establishing any concert with the duke, he put to sea, and landed near Harfleur, at the head of an army of 6000 men at arms, and 24,000 foot, mostly archers. He immediately began the siege of that place, which was valiantly defended by d'Estoüteville, and under him by de Guitri, de Gaucourt, and others of the French nobility: But as the garrison was weak, and the fortifications in bad repair, the governor was at last obliged to capitulate; and he promised to surrender the place if he received no succour before the eighteenth of September. The

14th Aug.

[f] St. Remi, chap. lv. Goodwin, p. 65.

[g] Rymer, vol. ix. p. 137, 138.

day

day came, and there was no appearance of a French army to relieve him. Henry, taking poſſeſſion of the town, placed a garriſon in it, and expelled all the French inhabitants, with an intention of peopling it anew with Engliſh. CHAP. XIX. 1415.

THE fatigues of this ſiege, and the unuſual heat of the ſeaſon, had ſo waſted the Engliſh army, that Henry could enter on no farther enterpriſe; and was obliged to think of returning into England. He had diſmiſſed his tranſports, which could not anchor in an open road upon the enemy's coaſts: And he lay under a neceſſity of marching by land to Calais, before he could reach a place of ſafety. A numerous French army of 14,000 men at arms, and 40,000 foot, was by this time aſſembled in Normandy under the conſtable d'Albret; a force which, if prudently conducted, was ſufficient either to trample down the Engliſh in the open field, or to haraſs and reduce to nothing their ſmall army, before they could finiſh ſo long and difficult a march. Henry, therefore, cautiouſly offered to ſacrifice his conqueſt of Harfleur for a ſafe paſſage to Calais; but his propoſal being rejected, he determined to make his way by valour and conduct through all the oppoſition of the enemy[i]. That he might not diſcourage his army by the appearance of flight, or expoſe them to thoſe hazards which naturally attend precipitate marches, he made ſlow and deliberate journies[k], till he reached the Somme, which he purpoſed to paſs at the ford of Blanquetague, the ſame place where Edward, in a like ſituation, had before eſcaped from Philip de Valois. But he found the ford rendered impaſſable by the precaution of the French general, and guarded by a ſtrong body on the oppoſite bank[l]; and he was obliged to march higher up the river, in order to ſeek for a ſafe paſſage. He

i De Laboureur, liv. 35. chap. 6.
k T. Livii, p. 12.
l St. Remi, chap. 58.

CHAP. XIX. 1415.

was continually haraſſed on his march by flying parties of the enemy; ſaw bodies of troops on the other ſide ready to oppoſe every attempt; his proviſions were cut off; his ſoldiers languiſhed with ſickneſs and fatigue; and his affairs ſeemed to be reduced to a deſperate ſituation: When he was ſo dexterous or ſo fortunate as to ſeize by ſurpriſe a paſſage near St. Quintin, which had not been ſufficiently guarded, and he ſafely carried over his army [m].

Battle of Azincour.

HENRY then bent his march northwards to Calais; but he was ſtill expoſed to great and imminent danger from the enemy, who had alſo paſſed the Somme, and threw themſelves full in his way, with a purpoſe of intercepting his retreat. After he had paſſed the ſmall river of Ternois at Blangi, he was ſurpriſed to obſerve from the heights the whole French army drawn up in the plains of Azincour, and ſo poſted, that it was impoſſible for him to proceed on his march without coming to an engagement. Nothing in appearance could be more unequal than the battle, upon which his ſafety and all his fortunes now depended. The Engliſh army was little more than half the number which had diſembarked at Harfleur; and they laboured under every diſcouragement and neceſſity. The enemy was four times more numerous; was headed by the dauphin and all the princes of the blood; and was plentifully ſupplied with proviſions of every kind. Henry's ſituation was exactly ſimilar to that of Edward at Creſſy, and that of the Black Prince at Poictiers; and the memory of theſe great events, inſpiring the Engliſh with courage, made them hope for a like deliverance from their preſent difficulties. The king likewiſe obſerved the ſame prudent conduct which had been followed by theſe great commanders: He drew up his army on a narrow ground

25th Oct.

[m] T. Livii, p. 13.

between

between two woods, which guarded each flank; and he patiently expected in that posture the attack of the enemy [n]. CHAP. XIX. 1415.

HAD the French constable been able, either to reason justly upon the present circumstances of the two armies, or to profit by past experience, he had declined a combat, and had waited till necessity, obliging the English to advance, had made them relinquish the advantages of their situation. But the impetuous valour of the nobility, and a vain confidence in superior numbers, brought on this fatal action, which proved the source of infinite calamities to their country. The French archers on horseback, and their men at arms, crowded in their ranks, advanced upon the English archers, who had fixed palisadoes in their front to break the impression of the enemy, and who safely plyed them, from behind that defence, with a shower of arrows, which nothing could resist [o]. The clay soil, moistened by some rain which had lately fallen, proved another obstacle to the force of the French cavalry: The wounded men and horses discomposed their ranks: The narrow compass in which they were pent, hindered them from recovering any order: The whole army was a scene of confusion, terror, and dismay: And Henry, perceiving his advantage, ordered the English archers, who were light and unincumbered, to advance upon the enemy, and seize the moment of victory. They fell with their battle-axes upon the French, who, in their present posture, were incapable either of flying or of making defence: They hewed them in pieces without resistance [p]; and being seconded by the men at arms, who also pushed on against the enemy, they covered the field with the killed, wounded, dismounted, and overthrown. After all appearance

[n] St. Remi, chap. 62. [o] Walsingham. p. 392. T. Livii, p. 19. Le Laboureur, liv. 35. chap. 7. Monstrelet, chap. 147.

[p] Walsingham, p. 393. Ypod. Neust. p. 584.

CHAP. XIX. 1415.

of oppoſition was over, the Engliſh had leiſure to make priſoners, and having advanced with uninterrupted ſucceſs to the open plain, they there ſaw the remains of the French rear guard, which ſtill maintained the appearance of a line of battle. At the ſame time, they heard an alarm from behind: Some gentlemen of Picardy, having collected about 600 peaſants, had fallen upon the Engliſh baggage, and were doing execution on the unarmed followers of the camp, who fled before them. Henry, ſeeing the enemy on all ſides of him, began to entertain apprehenſions from his priſoners; and he thought it neceſſary to iſſue general orders for putting them to death: But on diſcovering the truth, he ſtopped the ſlaughter, and was ſtill able to ſave a great number.

No battle was ever more fatal to France, by the number of princes and nobility ſlain or taken priſoners. Among the former were the conſtable himſelf, the count of Nevers and the duke of Brabant, brothers to the duke of Burgundy, the count of Vaudemont, brother to the duke of Lorraine, the duke of Alençon, the duke of Barre, the count of Marle. The moſt eminent priſoners were the dukes of Orleans and Bourbon, the counts d'Eu, Vendôme, and Richemont, and the mareſchal of Boucicaut. An archbiſhop of Sens alſo was ſlain in this battle. The killed are computed on the whole to have amounted to ten thouſand men; and as the ſlaughter fell chiefly upon the cavalry, it is pretended, that of theſe eight thouſand were gentlemen. Henry was maſter of 14,000 priſoners. The perſon of chief note, who fell among the Engliſh, was the duke of York, who periſhed fighting by the king's ſide, and had an end more honourable than his life. He was ſucceeded in his honours and fortune by his nephew, ſon of the earl of Cambridge, executed in the beginning of the year. All the Engliſh who were ſlain exceeded not

not forty; though ſome writers, with greater probability, make the number more conſiderable. CHAP. XIX. 1415.

THE three great battles of Creſſy, Poictiers, and Azincour, bear a ſingular reſemblance to each other in their moſt conſiderable circumſtances. In all of them, there appears the ſame temerity in the Engliſh princes, who without any object of moment, merely for the ſake of plunder, had ventured ſo far into the enemies country as to leave themſelves no retreat; and unleſs ſaved by the utmoſt imprudence in the French commanders, were, from their very ſituation, expoſed to inevitable deſtruction. But allowance being made for this temerity, which, according to the irregular plans of war followed in thoſe ages, ſeems to have been, in ſome meaſure, unavoidable; there appears, in the day of action, the ſame preſence of mind, dexterity, courage, firmneſs, and precaution, on the part of the Engliſh: The ſame precipitation, confuſion, and vain confidence, on the part of the French: And the events were ſuch as might have been expected from ſuch oppoſite conduct. The immediate conſequences too of theſe three great victories were ſimilar: Inſtead of puſhing the French with vigour, and taking advantage of their conſternation, the Engliſh princes, after their victory, ſeem rather to have relaxed their efforts, and to have allowed the enemy leiſure to recover from his loſſes. Henry interrupted not his march a moment after the battle of Azincour; he carried his priſoners to Calais, thence to England; he even concluded a truce with the enemy; and it was not till after an interval of two years that any body of Engliſh troops appeared in France.

THE poverty of all the European princes, and the ſmall reſources of their kingdoms, were the cauſe of theſe continual interruptions in their hoſtilities; and though the maxims of war were in general deſtructive, their military operations were mere incurſions,

CHAP. XIX. 1415. which, without any settled plan, they carried on against each other. The lustre, however, attending the victory of Azincour, procured some supplies from the English parliament, though still unequal to the expences of a campaign. They granted Henry an entire fifteenth of moveables; and they conferred on him, *for life*, the duties of tonnage and poundage, and the subsidies on the exportation of wool and leather. This concession is more considerable than that which had been granted to Richard II. by his last parliament, and which was afterwards, on his deposition, made so great an article of charge against him.

State of France. But during this interruption of hostilities from England, France was exposed to all the furies of civil war; and the several parties became every day more enraged against each other. The duke of Burgundy, confident that the French ministers and generals were entirely discredited by the misfortune at Azincour, advanced with a great army to Paris, and attempted to re-instate himself in possession of the government, as well as of the person of the king. But his partisans in that city were overawed by the court, and kept in subjection: The duke despaired of success; and he retired with his forces, which he immediately disbanded in the Low-Countries [q]. He 1417. was soon after invited to make a new attempt, by some violent quarrels which broke out in the royal family. The queen Isabella, daughter of the duke of Bavaria, who had been hitherto an inveterate enemy to the Burgundian faction, had received a great injury from the other party, which the implacable spirit of that princess was never able to forgive. The public necessities obliged the count of Armagnac, created constable of France in the place of d'Albret, to seize the great treasures which Isabella had amassed: And when she expressed her displeasure at this

[q] Le Laboureur, liv. 35. chap. 10.

injury,

injury, he inspired into the weak mind of the king some jealousies concerning her conduct, and pushed him to seize and put to the torture, and afterwards throw into the Seine, Bois-bourdon, her favourite, whom he accused of a commerce of gallantry with that princess. The queen herself was sent to Tours, and confined under a guard[r]; and, after suffering these multiplied insults, she no longer scrupled to enter into a correspondence with the duke of Burgundy. As her son, the dauphin Charles, a youth of sixteen, was entirely governed by the faction of Armagnac, she extended her animosity to him, and sought his destruction with the most unrelenting hatred. She had soon an opportunity of rendering her unnatural purpose effectual. The duke of Burgundy, in concert with her, entered France at the head of a great army: He made himself master of Amiens, Abbeville, Dourlens, Montreüil, and other towns in Picardy; Senlis, Rheims, Chalons, Troye, and Auxerre, declared themselves of his party[s]. He got possession of Beaumont, Pontoise, Vernon, Meulant, Montlheri, towns in the neighbourhood of Paris; and carrying farther his progress towards the west, he seized Etampes, Chartres, and other fortresses; and was at last able to deliver the queen, who fled to Troye, and openly declared against those ministers who, she said, detained her husband in captivity[t].

CHAP. XIX. 1417.

Meanwhile the partisans of Burgundy raised a commotion in Paris, which always inclined to that faction. Lile-Adam, one of the duke's captains, was received into the city in the night-time, and headed the insurrection of the people, which in a moment became so impetuous that nothing could oppose it. The person of the king was seized: The dauphin made his escape with difficulty: Great numbers of the faction of Armagnac were immediately butchered: The count himself, and many persons of note, were

[r] St. Remi, chap. 74. Monstrelet, chap. 167. [s] St. Remi, chap. 79. [t] Ibid. chap. 81. Monstrelet, chap. 178, 179.

thrown

CHAP. XIX. 1417. thrown into prison: Murders were daily committed from private animosity, under pretence of faction: And the populace, not satiated with their fury, and deeming the course of public justice too dilatory, broke into the prisons, and put to death the count of Armagnac, and all the other nobility who were there confined [u].

New invasion of France. 1st Aug. 1418. While France was in such furious combustion, and was so ill prepared to resist a foreign enemy, Henry having collected some treasure, and levied an army, landed in Normandy at the head of twenty-five thousand men; and met with no considerable opposition from any quarter. He made himself master of Falaise; Evreux and Caen submitted to him; Pont de l'Arche opened its gates; and Henry, having subdued all the lower Normandy, and having received a reinforcement of fifteen thousand men from England [w], formed the siege of Roüen, which was defended by a garrison of four thousand men, seconded by the inhabitants, to the number of fifteen thousand [x]. The cardinal des Ursins here attempted to incline him towards peace, and to moderate his pretensions: But the king replied to him in such terms, as shewed that he was fully sensible of all his present advantages: "Do you not see," said he, "that God has led me hither as by the hand? France "has no sovereign: I have just pretensions to that "kingdom: Every thing is here in the utmost con-"fusion: No one thinks of resisting me. Can I "have a more sensible proof, that the Being who "disposes of empires, has determined to put the "crown of France upon my head [y]?"

But though Henry had opened his mind to this scheme of ambition, he still continued to negociate with his enemies, and endeavoured to obtain more secure, though less considerable advantages. He

[u] St. Remi, chap. 85, 86. Monstrelet, chap. 118. [w] Walsingham, p. 400. [x] St. Remi, chap. 91. [y] Juvenal des Ursins.

made,

made, at the same time, offers of peace to both parties; to the queen and duke of Burgundy on the one hand, who, having possession of the king's person, carried the appearance of legal authority [z]; and to the dauphin on the other, who, being the undoubted heir of the monarchy, was adhered to by every one that payed any regard to the true interests of their country [a]. These two parties also carried on a continual negociation with each other. The terms proposed on all sides were perpetually varying: The events of the war, and the intrigues of the cabinet, intermingled with each other: And the fate of France remained long in this uncertainty. After many negociations, Henry offered the queen and the duke of Burgundy to make peace with them, to espouse the princess Catharine, and to accept of all the provinces ceded to Edward III. by the treaty of Bretigni, with the addition of Normandy, which he was to receive in full and entire sovereignty [b]. These terms were submitted to: There remained only some circumstances to adjust, in order to the entire completion of the treaty: But in this interval the duke of Burgundy secretly finished his treaty with the dauphin; and these two princes agreed to share the royal authority during king Charles's lifetime, and to unite their arms in order to expel foreign enemies [c]. CHAP. XIX. 1418. 1419.

This alliance, which seemed to cut off from Henry all hopes of farther success, proved, in the issue, the most favourable event that could have happened for his pretensions. Whether the dauphin and the duke of Burgundy were ever sincere in their mutual engagements, is uncertain; but very fatal effects resulted from their momentary and seeming union. The two princes agreed to an interview, in order to concert the means of rendering effectual their common attack on the English; but how both or either of them could with safety venture upon this confer-

[z] Rymer, vol. ix. p. 717. 749. [a] Ibid. p. 626, &c.
[b] Ibid. p. 762. [c] Ibid. p. 776. St. Remi, chap. 95.

ence,

CHAP. XIX. 1419.

ence, it seemed somewhat difficult to contrive. The assassination perpetrated by the duke of Burgundy, and still more, his open avowal of the deed, and defence of the doctrine, tended to dissolve all the bands of civil society; and even men of honour, who detested the example, might deem it just, on a favourable opportunity, to retaliate upon the author. The duke, therefore, who neither dared to give, nor could pretend to expect, any trust, agreed to all the contrivances for mutual security which were proposed by the ministers of the dauphin. The two princes came to Montereau: The duke lodged in the castle: The dauphin in the town, which was divided from the castle by the river Yonne: The bridge between them was chosen for the place of interview: Two high rails were drawn across the bridge: The gates on each side were guarded, one by the officers of the dauphin, the other by those of the duke: The princes were to enter into the intermediate space by the opposite gates, accompanied each by ten persons; and, with all these marks of diffidence, to conciliate their mutual friendship. But it appeared that no precautions are sufficient where laws have no place, and where all principles of honour are utterly abandoned. Tannegui de Chatel, and others of the dauphin's retainers, had been zealous partisans of the late duke of Orleans; and they determined to seize the opportunity of revenging on the assassin the murder of that prince: They no sooner entered the rails, than they drew their swords and attacked the duke of Burgundy: His friends were astonished, and thought not of making any defence; and all of them either shared his fate, or were taken prisoners by the retinue of the dauphin [d].

Assassination of the duke of Burgundy.

The extreme youth of this prince made it doubtful whether he had been admitted into the secret of the conspiracy: But as the deed was committed

[d] St. Remi, chap. 97. Monstrelet, chap. 211.

under his eye, by his most intimate friends, who still retained their connexions with him, the blame of the action, which was certainly more imprudent than criminal, fell entirely upon him. The whole state of affairs was every where changed by this unexpected incident. The city of Paris, passionately devoted to the family of Burgundy, broke out into the highest fury against the dauphin. The court of king Charles entered from interest into the same views; and as all the ministers of that monarch had owed their preferment to the late duke, and foresaw their downfall if the dauphin should recover possession of his father's person, they were concerned to prevent, by any means, the success of his enterprise. The queen, persevering in her unnatural animosity against her son, encreased the general flame, and inspired into the king, as far as he was susceptible of any sentiment, the same prejudices by which she herself had long been actuated. But above all, Philip count of Charolois, now duke of Burgundy, thought himself bound, by every tie of honour and of duty, to revenge the murder of his father, and to prosecute the assassin to the utmost extremity. And in this general transport of rage, every consideration of national and family interest was buried in oblivion by all parties: The subjection to a foreign enemy, the expulsion of the lawful heir, the slavery of the kingdom, appeared but small evils if they led to the gratification of the present passion.

CHAP. XIX. 1419.

The king of England had, before the death of the duke of Burgundy, profited extremely by the distractions of France, and was daily making a considerable progress in Normandy. He had taken Roüen after an obstinate siege[e]: He had made himself master of Pontoise and Gisors: He even threatened Paris, and by the terror of his arms had obliged the court to remove to Troye: And in the

[e] T. Livii, p. 69. Monstrelet, chap. 201.

midst

CHAP. XIX.

midſt of his ſucceſſes, he was agreeably ſurpriſed to find his enemies, inſtead of combining againſt him for their mutual defence, diſpoſed to ruſh into his arms, and to make him the inſtrument of their vengeance upon each other. A league was immediately concluded at Arras between him and the duke of Burgundy. This prince, without ſtipulating any thing for himſelf, except the proſecution of his father's murder, and the marriage of the duke of Bedford with his ſiſter, was willing to ſacrifice the kingdom to Henry's ambition; and he agreed to every demand made by that monarch. In order to

1419.

1420.

finiſh this aſtoniſhing treaty, which was to transfer the crown of France to a ſtranger, Henry went to Troye, accompanied by his brothers, the dukes of Clarence and Gloceſter; and was there met by the duke of Burgundy. The imbecility into which Charles had fallen, made him incapable of ſeeing any thing but through the eyes of thoſe who attended him; as they, on their part, ſaw every thing through the medium of their paſſions. The treaty, being already concerted among the parties, was immediately drawn, and ſigned, and ratified: Henry's will ſeemed to be a law throughout the whole negociation: Nothing was attended to but his advantages.

Treaty of Troye.

THE principal articles of the treaty were, that Henry ſhould eſpouſe the princeſs Catharine: That king Charles, during his lifetime, ſhould enjoy the title and dignity of king of France: That Henry ſhould be declared and acknowledged heir of the monarchy, and be entruſted with the preſent adminiſtration of the government: That that kingdom ſhould paſs to his heirs general: That France and England ſhould for ever be united under one king; but ſhould ſtill retain their ſeveral uſages, cuſtoms, and privileges: That all the princes, peers, vaſſals, and communities of France ſhould ſwear, that they would both adhere to the future ſucceſſion of Henry,

and pay him preſent obedience as regent: That this prince ſhould unite his arms to thoſe of king Charles and the duke of Burgundy, in order to ſubdue the adherents of Charles, the pretended dauphin: And that theſe three princes ſhould make no peace or truce with him but by common conſent and agreement [f]. CHAP. XIX. 1420.

SUCH was the tenour of this famous treaty; a treaty which, as nothing but the moſt violent animoſity could dictate it, ſo nothing but the power of the ſword could carry into execution. It is hard to ſay whether its conſequences, had it taken effect, would have proved more pernicious to England or to France. It muſt have reduced the former kingdom to the rank of a province: It would have entirely disjointed the ſucceſſion of the latter, and have brought on the deſtruction of every deſcendant of the royal family; as the houſes of Orleans, Anjou, Alençon, Britanny, Bourbon, and of Burgundy itſelf, whoſe titles were preferable to that of the Engliſh princes, would, on that account, have been expoſed to perpetual jealouſy and perſecution from the ſovereign. There was even a palpable deficiency in Henry's claim, which no art could palliate. For, beſides the inſuperable objections to which Edward IIId's pretenſions were expoſed, *he* was not heir to that monarch: If female ſucceſſion were admitted, the right had devolved on the houſe of Mortimer: Allowing that Richard II. was a tyrant, and that Henry IVth's merits in depoſing him were ſo great towards the Engliſh, as to juſtify that nation in placing him on the throne; Richard had nowiſe offended France, and his rival had merited nothing of that kingdom: It could not poſſibly be pretended that the crown of France was become an appendage to that of England; and that a prince who, by any means, got poſſeſſion of the latter, was, without far-

[f] Rymer, vol. ix. p. 895. St. Remi, chap. 101. Monſtrelet, chap. 223.

ther

CHAP. XIX. 1420.

ther queſtion, entitled to the former. So that, on the whole, it muſt be allowed that Henry's claim to France was, if poſſible, ſtill more unintelligible than the title by which his father had mounted the throne of England.

But though all theſe conſiderations were overlooked, amidſt the hurry of paſſion by which the courts of France and Burgundy were actuated, they would neceſſarily revive during times of more tranquillity; and it behoved Henry to puſh his preſent advantages, and allow men no leiſure for reaſon or reflection. In a few days after he eſpouſed the princeſs Catharine: He carried his father-in-law to Paris, and put himſelf in poſſeſſion of that capital: He obtained, from the parliament and the three eſtates, a ratification of the treaty of Troye: He ſupported the duke of Burgundy in procuring a ſentence againſt the murderers of his father: And he immediately turned his arms, with ſucceſs, againſt the adherents of the dauphin, who, as ſoon as he heard of the treaty of Troye, took on him the ſtyle and authority of regent, and appealed to God and his ſword for the maintenance of his title.

Marriage of the king.

The firſt place that Henry ſubdued was Sens, which opened its gates after a ſlight reſiſtance. With the ſame facility he made himſelf maſter of Montereau. The defence of Melun was more obſtinate: Barbaſan, the governor, held out for the ſpace of four months againſt the beſiegers; and it was famine alone which obliged him to capitulate. Henry ſtipulated to ſpare the lives of all the garriſon, except ſuch as were accomplices in the murder of the duke of Burgundy; and as Barbaſan himſelf was ſuſpected to be of the number, his puniſhment was demanded by Philip: But the king had the generoſity to intercede for him, and to prevent his execution [s].

[s] Hollingſhed, p. 577.

The

CHAP. XIX. 1421.

THE neceſſity of providing ſupplies, both of men and money, obliged Henry to go over to England; and he left the duke of Exeter, his uncle, governor of Paris during his abſence. The authority which naturally attends ſucceſs, procured from the Engliſh parliament a ſubſidy of a fifteenth; but, if we may judge by the ſcantineſs of the ſupply, the nation was nowiſe ſanguine on their king's victories; and in proportion as the proſpect of their union with France became nearer, they began to open their eyes, and to ſee the dangerous conſequences with which that event muſt neceſſarily be attended. It was fortunate for Henry, that he had other reſources beſides pecuniary ſupplies from his native ſubjects. The provinces which he had already conquered maintained his troops; and the hopes of farther advantages allured to his ſtandard all men of ambitious ſpirits in England, who deſired to ſignaliſe themſelves by arms. He levied a new army of twenty-four thouſand archers and four thouſand horſemen [h], and marched them to Dover, the place of rendezvous. Every thing had remained in tranquillity at Paris under the duke of Exeter; but there had happened, in another quarter of the kingdom, a misfortune which haſtened the king's embarkation.

THE detention of the young king of Scots in England had hitherto proved advantageous to Henry; and, by keeping the regent in awe, had preſerved, during the whole courſe of the French war, the northern frontier in tranquillity. But when intelligence arrived in Scotland of the progreſs made by Henry, and the near proſpect of his ſucceſſion to the crown of France, the nation was alarmed, and foreſaw their own inevitable ruin, if the ſubjection of their ally left them to combat alone a victorious enemy, who was already ſo much ſuperior in power and riches. The regent entered into the ſame views; and though he

[h] Monſtrelet, chap. 242.

CHAP. XIX. 1421.

declined an open rupture with England, he permitted a body of seven thousand Scots, under the command of the earl of Buchan, his second son, to be transported into France for the service of the dauphin. To render this aid ineffectual, Henry had, in his former expedition, carried over the king of Scots, whom he obliged to send orders to his countrymen to leave the French service; but the Scottish general replied, that he would obey no commands which came from a king in captivity, and that a prince, while in the hands of his enemy, was nowise entitled to authority. These troops, therefore, continued still to act under the earl of Buchan; and were employed by the dauphin to oppose the progress of the duke of Clarence in Anjou. The two armies encountered at Baugé: The English were defeated: The duke himself was slain by sir Allan Swinton, a Scotch knight, who commanded a company of men at arms: And the earls of Somerset[i], Dorset, and Huntingdon, were taken prisoners[k]. This was the first action that turned the tide of success against the English; and the dauphin, that he might both attach the Scotch to his service, and reward the valour and conduct of the earl of Buchan, honoured that nobleman with the office of constable.

But the arrival of the king of England with so considerable an army, was more than sufficient to repair this loss. Henry was received at Paris with great expressions of joy; so obstinate were the prejudices of the people: And he immediately conducted his army to Chartres, which had long been besieged by the dauphin. That prince raised the siege on the approach of the English; and being resolved to decline a battle, he retired with his

[i] His name was John, and he was afterwards created duke of Somerset. He was grandson of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster. The earl of Dorset was brother to Somerset, and succeeded him in that title.

[k] St. Remi, chap. 110. Monstrelet, chap. 239. Hall, fol. 76.

army.

army [s]. Henry made himself master of Dreux without a blow: He laid siege to Meaux at the solicitation of the Parisians, who were much incommoded by the garrison of that place. This enterprise employed the English arms during the space of eight months: The bastard of Vaurus, governor of Meaux, distinguished himself by an obstinate defence; but was at last obliged to surrender at discretion. The cruelty of this officer was equal to his bravery: He was accustomed to hang, without distinction, all the English and Burgundians who fell into his hands: And Henry, in revenge of his barbarity, ordered him immediately to be hanged on the same tree which he had made the instrument of his inhuman executions [m]. CHAP. XIX. 1421.

This success was followed by the surrender of many other places in the neighbourhood of Paris, which held for the dauphin: That prince was chased beyond the Loire, and he almost totally abandoned all the northern provinces: He was even pursued into the south by the united arms of the English and Burgundians, and threatened with total destruction. Notwithstanding the bravery and fidelity of his captains, he saw himself unequal to his enemies in the field; and found it necessary to temporise, and to avoid all hazardous actions with a rival, who had gained so much the ascendant over him. And to crown all the other prosperities of Henry, his queen was delivered of a son, who was called by his father's name, and whose birth was celebrated by rejoicings no less pompous, and no less sincere, at Paris than at London. The infant prince seemed to be universally regarded as the future heir of both monarchies.

But the glory of Henry, when it had nearly reached the summit, was stopped short by the hand 1422. Death,

[s] St. Remi, chap. 3. p. 92, 93. St. Remi, chap. 116. [m] Rymer, vol. x. p. 212. T. Livii, Monstrelet, chap. 260.

CHAP. XIX. 1422.

of nature; and all his mighty projects vaniſhed into ſmoke. He was ſeized with a fiſtula, a malady which the ſurgeons at that time had not ſkill enough to cure; and he was at laſt ſenſible that his diſtemper was mortal, and that his end was approaching. He ſent for his brother the duke of Bedford, the earl of Warwic, and a few noblemen more, whom he had honoured with his friendſhip; and he delivered to them, in great tranquillity, his laſt will with regard to the government of his kingdom and family. He entreated them to continue, towards his infant ſon, the ſame fidelity and attachment which they had always profeſſed to himſelf during his lifetime, and which had been cemented by ſo many mutual good offices. He expreſſed his indifference on the approach of death; and though he regretted that he muſt leave unfiniſhed a work ſo happily begun, he declared himſelf confident, that the final acquiſition of France would be the effect of their prudence and valour. He left the regency of that kingdom to his elder brother the duke of Bedford; that of England to his younger, the duke of Gloceſter; and the care of his ſon's perſon to the earl of Warwic. He recommended to all of them a great attention to maintain the friendſhip of the duke of Burgundy; and adviſed them never to give liberty to the French princes taken at Azincour, till his ſon were of age, and could himſelf hold the reins of government. And he conjured them, if the ſucceſs of their arms ſhould not enable them to place young Henry on the throne of France, never, at leaſt, to make peace with that kingdom, unleſs the enemy, by the ceſſion of Normandy, and its annexation to the crown of England, made compenſation for all the hazard and expence of his enterpriſe[n].

He next applied himſelf to his devotions, and ordered his chaplain to recite the ſeven penitential

[n] Monſtrelet, chap. 265. Hall, fol. 80.

pſalms.

psalms. When that passage of the fifty-first psalm was read, *build thou the walls of Jerusalem*; he interrupted the chaplain, and declared his serious intention, after he should have fully subdued France, to conduct a crusade against the infidels, and recover possession of the Holy Land [o]. So ingenious are men in deceiving themselves, that Henry forgot, in those moments, all the blood spilt by his ambition; and received comfort from this late and feeble resolve, which, as the mode of these enterprises was now past, he certainly would never have carried into execution. He expired in the thirty-fourth year of his age and the tenth of his reign. CHAP. XIX. 1422. 31st Aug.

and character of the king.

This prince possessed many eminent virtues; and if we give indulgence to ambition in a monarch, or rank it, as the vulgar are inclined to do, among his virtues, they were unstained by any considerable blemish. His abilities appeared equally in the cabinet and in the field: The boldness of his enterprises was no less remarkable than his personal valour in conducting them. He had the talent of attaching his friends by affability, and of gaining his enemies by address and clemency. The English, dazzled by the lustre of his character, still more than by that of his victories, were reconciled to the defects in his title: The French almost forgot that he was an enemy: And his care in maintaining justice in his civil administration, and preserving discipline in his armies, made some amends to both nations for the calamities inseparable from those wars in which his short reign was almost entirely occupied. That he could forgive the earl of Marche, who had a better title to the crown than himself, is a sure indication of his magnanimity; and that the earl relied so entirely on his friendship, is no less a proof of his established character for candour and sincerity. There remain in history few instances of such mutual trust; and

[o] St. Remi, chap. 118. Monstrelet, chap. 265.

CHAP. XIX.

still fewer where neither party found reason to repent it.

1422. The exterior figure of this great prince, as well as his deportment, was engaging. His stature was somewhat above the middle size; his countenance beautiful; his limbs genteel and slender, but full of vigour; and he excelled in all warlike and manly exercises [p]. He left, by his queen, Catherine of France, only one son, not full nine months old; whose misfortunes, in the course of his life, surpassed all the glories and successes of his father.

In less than two months after Henry's death, Charles VI. of France, his father-in-law, terminated his unhappy life. He had, for several years, possessed only the appearance of royal authority: Yet was this mere appearance of considerable advantage to the English; and divided the duty and affections of the French between them and the dauphin. This prince was proclaimed and crowned king of France at Poictiers, by the name of Charles VII. Rheims, the place where this ceremony is usually performed, was at that time in the hands of his enemies.

Catherine of France, Henry's widow, married, soon after his death, a Welsh gentleman, sir Owen Tudor, said to be descended from the ancient princes of that country: She bore him two sons, Edmund and Jasper, of whom the eldest was created earl of Richmond; the second earl of Pembroke. The family of Tudor, first raised to distinction by this alliance, mounted afterwards the throne of England.

Miscellaneous transactions.

The long schism, which had divided the Latin church for near forty years, was finally terminated in this reign by the council of Constance; which deposed the pope, John XXIII. for his crimes, and elected Martin V. in his place, who was acknowledged by almost all the kingdoms of Europe. This great and unusual act of authority in the council

[p] T. Livii, p. 4.

gave

gave the Roman pontiffs ever after a mortal antipathy to thoſe aſſemblies. The ſame jealouſy which had long prevailed in moſt European countries, between the civil ariſtocracy and monarchy, now alſo took place between theſe powers in the eccleſiaſtical body. But the great ſeparation of the biſhops in the ſeveral ſtates, and the difficulty of aſſembling them, gave the pope a mighty advantage, and made it more eaſy for him to centre all the powers of the hierarchy in his own perſon. The cruelty and treachery which attended the puniſhment of John Huſs and Jerome of Prague, the unhappy diſciples of Wickliffe, who, in violation of a ſafe conduct, were burned alive for their errors by the council of Conſtance, prove this melancholy truth, that toleration is none of the virtues of prieſts in any form of eccleſiaſtical government. But as the Engliſh nation had little or no concern in theſe great tranſactions, we are here the more conciſe in relating them. CHAP. XIX. 1422.

THE firſt commiſſion of array which we meet with, was iſſued in this reign[q]. The military part of the feudal ſyſtem, which was the moſt eſſential circumſtance of it, was entirely diſſolved; and could no longer ſerve for the defence of the kingdom. Henry, therefore, when he went to France in 1415, impowered certain commiſſioners to take, in each county, a review of all the freemen able to bear arms, to divide them into companies, and to keep them in readineſs for reſiſting an enemy. This was the æra when the feudal militia in England gave place to one which was perhaps ſtill leſs orderly and regular.

WE have an authentic and exact account of the ordinary revenue of the crown during this reign; and it amounts only to 55,714 pounds 10 ſhillings and 10 pence a year[r]. This is nearly the ſame with the revenue of Henry III. and the kings of Eng-

[q] Rymer, vol. ix. p. 254, 255.

[r] Rymer, vol. x. p. 113.

CHAP. XIX. 1422.

land had neither become much richer nor poorer in the courſe of ſo many years. The ordinary expence of the government amounted to 42,507 pounds 16 ſhillings and 10 pence: So that the king had a ſurplus only of 13,206 pounds 14 ſhillings for the ſupport of his houſehold; for his wardrobe; for the expence of embaſſies; and other articles. This ſum was nowiſe ſufficient: He was therefore obliged to have frequent recourſe to parliamentary ſupplies, and was thus, even in time of peace, not altogether independent of his people. But wars were attended with a great expence, which neither the prince's ordinary revenue, nor the extraordinary ſupplies, were able to bear; and the ſovereign was always reduced to many miſerable ſhifts, in order to make any tolerable figure in them. He commonly borrowed money from all quarters; he pawned his jewels, and ſometimes the crown itſelf[s]; he ran in arrears to his army; and he was often obliged, notwithſtanding all theſe expedients, to ſtop in the midſt of his career of victory, and to grant truces to the enemy. The high pay which was given to ſoldiers agreed very ill with this low income. All the extraordinary ſupplies granted by parliament to Henry during the courſe of his reign were only ſeven tenths and fifteenths, about 203,000 pounds[t]. It is eaſy to compute how ſoon this money muſt be exhauſted by armies of 24,000 archers, and 6000 horſe; when each archer had ſix-pence a day[u], and each horſeman two ſhillings. The moſt ſplendid ſucceſſes proved commonly fruitleſs, when ſupported by ſo poor a revenue; and the debts and difficulties which the king thereby incurred made him pay dear for his victories. The civil adminiſtration likewiſe,

[s] Rymer, vol. x. p. 190. [t] Parliamentary Hiſtory, vol. ii. p. 168.

[u] It appears from many paſſages of Rymer, particularly vol. ix. p. 258. that the king paid 20 marks a year for an archer, which is a good deal above ſix pence a day. The price had riſen, as is natural, by raiſing the denomination of money.

even in time of peace, could never be very regular, where the government was so ill enabled to support itself. Henry, till within a year of his death, owed debts which he had contracted when prince of Wales [w]. It was in vain that the parliament pretended to restrain him from arbitrary practices, when he was reduced to such necessities. Though the right of levying purveyance, for instance, had been expressly guarded against by the Great Charter itself, and was frequently complained of by the commons, it was found absolutely impracticable to abolish it; and the parliament at length, submitting to it as a legal prerogative, contented themselves with enacting laws to limit and confine it. The duke of Gloucester, in the reign of Richard II. possessed a revenue of 60,000 crowns (about 30,000 pounds a year of our present money), as we learn from Froissard [x], and was, consequently, richer than the king himself, if all circumstances be duly considered. CHAP. XIX. 1422.

It is remarkable, that the city of Calais alone was an annual expence to the crown of 19,119 pounds [y]; that is, above a third of the common charge of the government in time of peace. This fortress was of no use to the defence of England, and only gave that kingdom an inlet to annoy France. Ireland cost two thousand pounds a year, over and above its own revenue; which was certainly very low. Every thing conspires to give us a very mean idea of the state of Europe in those ages.

From the most early times, till the reign of Edward III. the denomination of money had never been altered: A pound sterling was still a pound troy; that is, about three pounds of our present money. That conqueror was the first that innovated in this important article. In the twentieth of his reign he coined twenty-two shillings from

[w] Rymer, vol. x. p. 114, [x] Liv. iv. chap. 86. [y] Rymer, vol. x. p. 113.

a pound

CHAP. XIX. 1422.

a pound troy; in his twenty-ſeventh year he coined twenty-five ſhillings. But Henry V. who was alſo a conqueror, raiſed ſtill farther the denomination, and coined thirty ſhillings from a pound troy[z]: His revenue, therefore, muſt have been about 110,000 pounds of our preſent money; and, by the cheapneſs of proviſions, was equivalent to above 330,000 pounds.

None of the princes of the houſe of Lancaſter ventured to impoſe taxes without conſent of parliament: Their doubtful or bad title became ſo far of advantage to the conſtitution. The rule was then fixed, and could not ſafely be broken afterwards, even by more abſolute princes.

[z] Fleetwood's Chronicon Precioſum, p. 52.

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CHAP. XX.

HENRY VI.

Government during the minority——State of France——Military operations——Battle of Verneüil——Siege of Orleans——The maid of Orleans——The ſiege of Orleans raiſed——The king of France crowned at Rheims——Prudence of the duke of Bedford——Execution of the maid of Orleans——Defection of the duke of Burgundy——Death of the duke of Bedford——Decline of the Engliſh in France——Truce with France——Marriage of the king with Margaret of Anjou——Murder of the duke of Gloceſter——State of France——Renewal of the war with France——The Engliſh expelled France.

CHAP. XX. 1422. Government during the minority.

DURING the reigns of the Lancaſtrian princes, the authority of parliament ſeems to have been more confirmed, and the privileges of the people more regarded, than during any former period; and the two preceding kings, though men of great ſpirit and abilities, abſtained from ſuch exertions of prerogative, as even weak princes, whoſe title was undiſputed, were tempted to think they might venture upon with impunity. The long minority, of which there was now the proſpect, encouraged ſtill farther the lords and commons to extend their influence; and without paying much regard to the verbal deſtination of Henry V. they aſſumed the power of giving a new arrangement to the whole adminiſtration. They declined altogether the name of *Regent* with regard to England: They appointed

CHAP. XX. 1422.

the duke of Bedford *protector* or *guardian* of that kingdom, a title which they ſuppoſed to imply leſs authority: They inveſted the duke of Gloceſter with the ſame dignity during the abſence of his elder brother[a]: And, in order to limit the power of both theſe princes, they appointed a council without whoſe advice and approbation no meaſure of importance could be determined[b]. The perſon and education of the infant prince was committed to Henry Beaufort, biſhop of Wincheſter, his great uncle, and the legitimated ſon of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaſter; a prelate, who, as his family could never have any pretenſions to the crown, might ſafely, they thought, be intruſted with that important charge[c]. The two princes, the dukes of Bedford and Gloceſter, who ſeemed injured by this plan of government, yet, being perſons of great integrity and honour, acquieſced in any appointment which tended to give ſecurity to the public; and as the wars in France appeared to be the object of greateſt moment, they avoided every diſpute which might throw an obſtacle in the way of foreign conqueſts.

State of France.

When the ſtate of affairs between the Engliſh and French kings was conſidered with a ſuperficial eye, every advantage ſeemed to be on the ſide of the former; and the total expulſion of Charles appeared to be an event which might naturally be expected from the ſuperior power of his competitor. Though Henry was yet in his infancy, the adminiſtration was devolved on the duke of Bedford, the moſt accompliſhed prince of his age; whoſe experience, prudence, valour, and generoſity, qualified him for his high office, and enabled him both to maintain union among his friends, and to gain the confidence of his ene-

[a] Rymer, vol. x. p. 261. Cotton, p 564. [b] Cotton, p. 564.
[c] Hall, fol. 83. Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p 27.

mies.

mies. The whole power of England was at his command: He was at the head of armies enured to victory: He was seconded by the most renowned generals of the age, the earls of Somerset, Warwic, Salisbury, Suffolk, and Arundel, sir John Talbot, and sir John Fastolfe: and besides Guienne, the ancient inheritance of England, he was master of the capital, and of almost all the northern provinces, which were well enabled to furnish him with supplies both of men and money, and to assist and support his English forces. CHAP. XX. 1422.

But Charles, notwithstanding the present inferiority of his power, possessed some advantages, derived partly from his situation, partly from his personal character, which promised him success, and served, first to control, then to overbalance the superior force and opulence of his enemies. He was the true and undoubted heir of the monarchy: All Frenchmen, who knew the interests, or desired the independence of their country, turned their eyes towards him as its sole resource: The exclusion given him by the imbecility of his father, and the forced or precipitate consent of the states, had plainly no validity: That spirit of faction, which had blinded the people, could not long hold them in so gross a delusion: Their national and inveterate hatred against the English, the authors of all their calamities, must soon revive, and inspire them with indignation, at bending their necks under the yoke of that hostile people: Great nobles and princes, accustomed to maintain an independence against their native sovereigns, would never endure a subjection to strangers: And though most of the princes of the blood were, since the fatal battle of Azincour, detained prisoners in England, the inhabitants of their demesnes, their friends, their vassals, all declared a zealous attachment to the king, and exerted themselves in resisting the violence of foreign invaders.

Charles

CHAP. XX. 1422.

CHARLES himself, though only in his twentieth year, was of a character well calculated to become the object of these benevolent sentiments; and, perhaps, from the favour which naturally attends youth, was the more likely, on account of his tender age, to acquire the good-will of his native subjects. He was a prince of the most friendly and benign disposition, of easy and familiar manners, and of a just and sound, though not a very vigorous understanding. Sincere, generous, affable, he engaged, from affection, the services of his followers, even while his low fortunes might make it their interest to desert him; and the lenity of his temper could pardon in them those sallies of discontent to which princes in his situation are so frequently exposed. The love of pleasure often seduced him into indolence; but, amidst all his irregularities, the goodness of his heart still shone forth; and, by exerting at intervals his courage and activity, he proved, that his general remissness proceeded not from the want either of a just spirit of ambition, or of personal valour.

THOUGH the virtues of this amiable prince lay some time in obscurity, the duke of Bedford knew that his title alone made him formidable, and that every foreign assistance would be requisite, ere an English regent could hope to complete the conquest of France; an enterprise which, however it might seem to be much advanced, was still exposed to many and great difficulties. The chief circumstance which had procured to the English all their present advantages was, the resentment of the duke of Burgundy against Charles; and as that prince seemed intent rather on gratifying his passion than consulting his interests, it was the more easy for the regent, by demonstrations of respect and confidence, to retain him in the alliance of England. He bent therefore all his endeavours to that purpose: He gave the duke every proof of friendship and regard:

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He even offered him the regency of France, which Philip declined: And that he might corroborate national connexions by private ties, he concluded his own marriage with the princeſs of Burgundy, which had been ſtipulated by the treaty of Arras. CHAP. XX. 1422.

BEING ſenſible, that next to the alliance of Burgundy, the friendſhip of the duke of Britanny was of the greateſt importance towards forwarding the Engliſh conqueſts; and that, as the provinces of France, already ſubdued, lay between the dominions of theſe two princes, he could never hope for any ſecurity without preſerving his connexions with them; he was very intent on ſtrengthening himſelf alſo from that quarter. The duke of Britanny, having received many juſt reaſons of diſpleaſure from the miniſters of Charles, had already acceded to the treaty of Troye, and had, with other vaſſals of the crown, done homage to Henry V. in quality of heir to the kingdom: But as the regent knew, that the duke was much governed by his brother, the count of Richemont, he endeavoured to fix his friendſhip, by paying court and doing ſervices to this haughty and ambitious prince. 1423.

ARTHUR, count of Richemont, had been taken priſoner at the battle of Azincour, had been treated with great indulgence by the late king, and had even been permitted on his parole to take a journey into Britanny, where the ſtate of affairs required his preſence. The death of that victorious monarch happened before Richemont's return; and this prince pretended, that as his word was given perſonally to Henry V. he was not bound to fulfil it towards his ſon and ſucceſſor: A chicane which the regent, as he could not force him to compliance, deemed it prudent to overlook. An interview was ſettled at Amiens between the dukes of Bedford, Burgundy, and Britanny, at which the count of Richemont was alſo preſent[d]: The alli- 17th Apr.

[d] Hall, fol. 84. Monſtrelet, vol. i. p. 4. Stowe, p. 364.

ance

CHAP. XX. 1423.

ance was renewed between these princes: And the regent persuaded Philip to give in marriage to Richemont his eldest sister, widow of the deceased dauphin, Lewis, the elder brother of Charles. Thus Arthur was connected both with the regent and the duke of Burgundy, and seemed engaged by interest to prosecute the same object, in forwarding the success of the English arms.

While the vigilance of the duke of Bedford was employed in gaining or confirming these allies, whose vicinity rendered them so important, he did not overlook the state of more remote countries. The duke of Albany, regent of Scotland, had died; and his power had devolved on Murdac, his son, a prince of a weak understanding and indolent disposition; who, far from possessing the talents requisite for the government of that fierce people, was not even able to maintain authority in his own family, or restrain the petulance and insolence of his sons. The ardour of the Scots to serve in France, where Charles treated them with great honour and distinction, and where the regent's brother enjoyed the dignity of constable, broke out afresh under this feeble administration: New succours daily came over, and filled the armies of the French king: The earl of Douglas conducted a reinforcement of 5000 men to his assistance: And it was justly to be dreaded that the Scots, by commencing open hostilities in the north, would occasion a diversion still more considerable of the English power, and would ease Charles, in part, of that load by which he was at present so grievously oppressed. The duke of Bedford, therefore, persuaded the English council to form an alliance with James their prisoner; to free that prince from his long captivity; and to connect him with England, by marrying him to a daughter of the earl of Somerset and cousin of the young king[c]. As the Scottish

[c] Hall, fol. 86. Stowe, p. 364. Grafton, p. 501.

regent

regent, tired of his present dignity, which he was not able to support, was now become entirely sincere in his applications for James's liberty; the treaty was soon concluded; a ransom of forty thousand pounds was stipulated [f]; and the king of Scots was restored to the throne of his ancestors, and proved, in his short reign, one of the most illustrious princes that had ever governed that kingdom. He was murdered, in 1437, by his traiterous kinsman the earl of Athole. His affections inclined to the side of France; but the English had never reason, during his life-time, to complain of any breach of the neutrality by Scotland. CHAP. XX. 1423.

But the regent was not so much employed in these political negociations as to neglect the operations of war, from which alone he could hope to succeed in expelling the French monarch. Though the chief seat of Charles's power lay in the southern provinces beyond the Loire; his partisans were possessed of some fortresses in the northern, and even in the neighbourhood of Paris; and it behoved the duke of Bedford first to clear these countries from the enemy, before he could think of attempting more distant conquests. The castle of Dorsoy was taken after a siege of six weeks: That of Noyelle and the town of Rüe in Picardy underwent the same fate: Pont sur Seine, Vertus, Montaigu, were subjected by the English arms: And a more considerable advantage was soon after gained by the united forces of England and Burgundy. John Stuart, constable of Scotland, and the lord of Estissac, had formed the siege of Crevant in Burgundy: The earls of Salisbury and Suffolk, with the count of Toulongeon, were sent to its relief: A fierce and well-disputed action ensued: The Scots and French were defeated: The constable of Scotland, and the count of Ventadour, were taken prisoners: And above a thousand men, among whom was sir William Military operations.

[f] Rymer, vol. x. p. 299, 300. 326

CHAP. XX.

liam Hamilton, were left on the field of battle[g]. The taking of Gaillon upon the Seine, and of la Charite upon the Loire, was the fruit of this victory: And as this latter place opened an entrance into the ſouthern provinces, the acquiſition of it appeared on that account of the greater importance to the duke of Bedford, and ſeemed to promiſe a ſucceſsful iſſue to the war.

1423.

1424. THE more Charles was threatened with an invaſion in thoſe provinces which adhered to him, the more neceſſary it became that he ſhould retain poſſeſſion of every fortreſs which he ſtill held within the quarters of the enemy. The duke of Bedford had beſieged in perſon, during the ſpace of three months, the town of Yvri in Normandy; and the brave governor, unable to make any longer defence, was obliged to capitulate; and he agreed to ſurrender the town, if, before a certain term, no relief arrived. Charles, informed of theſe conditions, determined to make an attempt for ſaving the place. He collected, with ſome difficulty, an army of 14000 men, of whom one half were Scots; and he ſent them thither under the command of the earl of Buchan, conſtable of France; who was attended by the earl of Douglas, his countryman, the duke of Alençon, the mareſchal de la Fayette, the count of Aumale, and the viſcount of Narbonne. When the conſtable arrived within a few leagues of Yvri, he found that he was come too late, and that the place was already ſurrendered. He immediately turned to the left, and ſat down before Verneüil, which the inhabitants, in ſpite of the garriſon, delivered up to him[h]. Buchan might now have returned in ſafety, and with the glory of making an acquiſition no leſs important than the place which he was ſent to relieve: But hearing of Bedford's ap-

[g] Hall, fol. 85. Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 8. Hollingſhed, p. 586. Grafton, p. 500. [h] Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 14. Grafton, p. 504.

proach,

proach, he called a council of war, in order to deliberate concerning the conduct which he should hold in this emergence. The wiser part of the council declared for a retreat; and represented, that all the past misfortunes of the French had proceeded from their rashness in giving battle when no necessity obliged them; that this army was the last resource of the king, and the only defence of the few provinces which remained to him; and that every reason invited him to embrace cautious measures, which might leave time for his subjects to return to a sense of their duty, and give leisure for discord to arise among his enemies, who, being united by no common band of interest or motive of alliance, could not long persevere in their animosity against him. All these prudential considerations were overborne by a vain point of honour, not to turn their backs to the enemy; and they resolved to await the arrival of the duke of Bedford. CHAP. XX. 1424.

THE numbers were nearly equal in this action; and as the long continuance of war had introduced discipline, which, however imperfect, sufficed to maintain some appearance of order in such small armies, the battle was fierce, and well disputed, and attended with bloodshed on both sides. The constable drew up his forces under the walls of Verneüil, and resolved to abide the attack of the enemy: But the impatience of the viscount of Narbonne, who advanced precipitately, and obliged the whole line to follow him in some hurry and confusion, was the cause of the misfortune which ensued. The English archers, fixing their palisadoes before them, according to their usual custom, sent a volley of arrows amidst the thickest of the French army; and though beaten from their ground, and obliged to take shelter among the baggage, they soon rallied, and continued to do great execution upon the enemy. The duke of Bedford, meanwhile, at the head of the men at arms, made impression on the French, broke 27th Aug. Battle of Verneüil.

CHAP. XX. 1424.

their ranks, chaſed them off the field, and rendered the victory entirely complete and deciſive[i]. The conſtable himſelf periſhed in battle, as well as the earl of Douglas and his ſon, the counts of Aumale, Tonnerre, and Ventadour, with many other conſiderable nobility. The duke of Alençon, the mareſchal de la Fayette, the lords of Gaucour and Mortemar, were taken priſoners. There fell about four thouſand of the French, and ſixteen hundred of the Engliſh; a loſs eſteemed at that time ſo unuſual on the ſide of the victors, that the duke of Bedford forbad all rejoicings for his ſucceſs. Verneüil was ſurrendered next day by capitulation[k].

THE condition of the king of France now appeared very terrible, and almoſt deſperate. He had loſt the flower of his army and the braveſt of his nobles in this fatal action: He had no reſource either for recruiting or ſubſiſting his troops: He wanted money even for his perſonal ſubſiſtence; and though all parade of a court was baniſhed, it was with difficulty he could keep a table, ſupplied with the plaineſt neceſſaries, for himſelf and his few followers: Every day brought him intelligence of ſome loſs or misfortune: Towns which were bravely defended were obliged at laſt to ſurrender for want of relief or ſupply: He ſaw his partiſans entirely chaſed from all the provinces which lay north of the Loire: And he expected ſoon to loſe, by the united efforts of his enemies, all the territories of which he had hitherto continued maſter; when an incident happened which ſaved him on the brink of ruin, and loſt the Engliſh ſuch an opportunity for completing their conqueſts as they never afterwards were able to recal.

JAQUELINE, counteſs of Hainault and Holland, and heir of theſe provinces, had eſpouſed John duke

[i] Hall, fol. 88, 89, 90. Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 15. Stowe, p. 365. Hollingſhed, p. 588. [k] Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 15.

of

of Brabant, couſin-german to the duke of Burgundy; but, having made this choice from the uſual motives of princes, ſhe ſoon found reaſon to repent of the unequal alliance. She was a princeſs of a maſculine ſpirit and uncommon underſtanding; the duke of Brabant was of a ſickly complexion and weak mind: She was in the vigour of her age; he had only reached his fifteenth year: Theſe cauſes had inſpired her with ſuch contempt for her huſband, which ſoon proceeded to antipathy, that ſhe determined to diſſolve a marriage, where, it is probable, nothing but the ceremony had as yet intervened. The court of Rome was commonly very open to applications of this nature, when ſeconded by power and money; but, as the princeſs foreſaw great oppoſition from her huſband's relations, and was impatient to effect her purpoſe, ſhe made her eſcape into England, and threw herſelf under the protection of the duke of Gloceſter. That prince, with many noble qualities, had the defect of being governed by an impetuous temper and vehement paſſions; and he was raſhly induced, as well by the charms of the counteſs herſelf, as by the proſpect of poſſeſſing her rich inheritance, to offer himſelf to her as a huſband. Without waiting for a papal diſpenſation; without endeavouring to reconcile the duke of Burgundy to the meaſure, he entered into a contract of marriage with Jaqueline, and immediately attempted to put himſelf in poſſeſſion of her dominions. Philip was diſguſted with ſo precipitate a conduct: He reſented the injury done to the duke of Brabant, his near relation: He dreaded to have the Engliſh eſtabliſhed on all ſides of him: And he foreſaw the conſequences which muſt attend the extenſive and uncontrolled dominion of that nation, if before the full ſettlement of their power, they inſulted and injured an ally, to whom they had already been ſo much indebted, and who was ſtill ſo neceſſary for ſupporting them in their farther progreſs. He encouraged, therefore, the duke of Brabant to

CHAP. XX. 1424.

CHAP. XX. 1424.

make reſiſtance: He engaged many of Jaqueline's ſubjects to adhere to that prince: He himſelf marched troops to his ſupport: And as the duke of Gloceſter ſtill perſevered in his purpoſe, a ſharp war was ſuddenly kindled in the Low Countries. The quarrel ſoon became perſonal as well as political. The Engliſh prince wrote to the duke of Burgundy, complaining of the oppoſition made to his pretenſions; and though, in the main, he employed amicable terms in his letter, he took notice of ſome falſehoods into which, he ſaid, Philip had been betrayed during the courſe of theſe tranſactions. This unguarded expreſſion was highly reſented: The duke of Burgundy inſiſted that he ſhould retract it: And mutual challenges and defiances paſſed between them on this occaſion [l].

The duke of Bedford could eaſily foreſee the bad effects of ſo ill-timed and imprudent a quarrel. All the ſuccours which he expected from England, and which were ſo neceſſary in this critical emergence, were intercepted by his brother, and employed in Holland and Hainault: The forces of the duke of Burgundy, which he alſo depended on, were diverted by the ſame wars: And, beſides this double loſs, he was in imminent danger of alienating, for ever, that confederate, whoſe friendſhip was of the utmoſt importance, and whom the late king had enjoined him, with his dying breath, to gratify by every mark of regard and attachment. He repreſented all theſe topics to the duke of Gloceſter: He endeavoured to mitigate the reſentment of the duke of Burgundy: He interpoſed with his good offices between theſe princes: But was not ſucceſsful in any of his endeavours; and he found that the impetuoſity of his brother's temper was ſtill the chief obſtacle to all accommodation [m]. For this reaſon, inſtead of puſhing the victory gained at Verneüil, he

[l] Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 19, 20, 21.

[m] Monſtrelet, p. 18.

found

found himself obliged to take a journey into England, and to try, by his counsels and authority, to moderate the measures of the duke of Gloucester. CHAP. XX. 1424.

THERE had likewise broken out some differences among the English ministry, which had proceeded to great extremities, and which required the regent's presence to compose them [n]. The bishop of Winchester, to whom the care of the king's person and education had been entrusted, was a prelate of great capacity and experience, but of an intriguing and dangerous character; and, as he aspired to the government of affairs, he had continual disputes with his nephew, the protector; and he gained frequent advantages over the vehement and impolitic temper of that prince. The duke of Bedford employed the authority of parliament to reconcile them; and these rivals were obliged to promise before that assembly, that they would bury all quarrels in oblivion [o]. Time also seemed to open expedients for composing the difference with the duke of Burgundy. The credit of that prince had procured a bull from the pope; by which not only Jaqueline's contract with the duke of Gloucester was annulled; but it was also declared, that even in case of the duke of Brabant's death, it should never be lawful for her to espouse the English prince. Humphrey despairing of success, married another lady of inferior rank, who had lived some time with him as his mistress [p]. The duke of Brabant died; and his widow, before she could recover possession of her dominions, was obliged to declare the duke of Burgundy her heir, in case she should die without issue, and to promise never to marry without his consent. But though the affair was thus terminated to the satisfaction of Philip, it left a disagreeable 1425.

[n] Stowe, p. 368. Hollingshed, p. 590. [o] Hall, fol. 98, 99. Hollingshed, p. 593, 594. Polydore Virgil, p. 466. Grafton, p. 512. 519. [p] Stowe, p. 367.

CHAP. XX. 1425.

impreſſion on his mind: It excited an extreme jealouſy of the Engliſh, and opened his eyes to his true intereſts: And as nothing but his animoſity againſt Charles had engaged him in alliance with them, it counterbalanced that paſſion by another of the ſame kind, which in the end became prevalent, and brought him back, by degrees, to his natural connexions with his family and his native country.

About the ſame time the duke of Britanny began to withdraw himſelf from the Engliſh alliance. His brother, the count of Richemont, though connected by marriage with the dukes of Burgundy and Bedford, was extremely attached by inclination to the French intereſt; and he willingly hearkened to all the advances which Charles made him for obtaining his friendſhip. The ſtaff of conſtable, vacant by the earl of Buchan's death, was offered him; and, as his martial and ambitious temper aſpired to the command of armies, which he had in vain attempted to obtain from the duke of Bedford, he not only accepted that office, but brought over his brother to an alliance with the French monarch. The new conſtable, having made this one change in his meaſures, firmly adhered, ever after, to his engagements with France. Though his pride and violence, which would admit of no rival in his maſter's confidence, and even prompted him to aſſaſſinate the other favourites, had ſo much diſguſted Charles, that he once baniſhed him the court, and refuſed to admit him to his preſence, he ſtill acted with vigour for the ſervice of that monarch, and obtained, at laſt, by his perſeverance, the pardon of all paſt offences.

1426. In this ſituation the duke of Bedford, on his return, found the affairs of France, after paſſing eight months in England. The duke of Burgundy was much diſguſted. The duke of Britanny had entered into engagements with Charles, and had done

done homage to that prince for his dutchy. The French had been allowed to recover from the aſtoniſhment into which their frequent diſaſters had thrown them. An incident too had happened, which ſerved extremely to raiſe their courage. The earl of Warwic had beſieged Montargis with a ſmall army of three thouſand men, and the place was reduced to extremity, when the baſtard of Orleans undertook to throw relief into it. This general, who was natural ſon to the prince aſſaſſinated by the duke of Burgundy, and who was afterwards created count of Dunois, conducted a body of ſixteen hundred men to Montargis; and made an attack on the enemy's trenches with ſo much valour, prudence, and good fortune, that he not only penetrated into the place, but gave a ſevere blow to the Engliſh, and obliged Warwic to raiſe the ſiege [q]. This was the firſt ſignal action that raiſed the fame of Dunois, and opened him the road to thoſe great honours which he afterwards attained. CHAP. XX. 1426.

But the regent, ſoon after his arrival, revived the reputation of the Engliſh arms, by an important enterpriſe which he happily atchieved. He ſecretly brought together, in ſeparate detachments, a conſiderable army to the frontiers of Britanny; and fell ſo unexpectedly upon that province, that the duke, unable to make reſiſtance, yielded to all the terms required of him: He renounced the French alliance; he engaged to maintain the treaty of Troye; he acknowledged the duke of Bedford for regent of France; and promiſed to do homage for his dutchy to king Henry [r]. And the Engliſh prince, having thus freed himſelf from a dangerous enemy who lay behind him, reſolved on an undertaking which, if ſucceſsful, would, he hoped, caſt the balance between the two nations, and prepare the way for the final conqueſt of France.

[q] Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 32, 33. Hollingſhed, p. 597.
[r] Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 35, 36.

The

CHAP. XX.

1428. Siege of Orleans.

THE city of Orleans was ſo ſituated between the provinces commanded by Henry, and thoſe poſſeſſed by Charles, that it opened an eaſy entrance to either; and as the duke of Bedford intended to make a great effort for penetrating into the ſouth of France, it behoved him to begin with this place, which, in the preſent circumſtances, was become the moſt important in the kingdom. He committed the conduct of the enterpriſe to the earl of Saliſbury, who had newly brought him a reinforcement of ſix thouſand men from England, and who had much diſtinguiſhed himſelf, by his abilities, during the courſe of the preſent war. Saliſbury paſſing the Loire, made himſelf maſter of ſeveral ſmall places, which ſurrounded Orleans on that ſide[s]; and as his intentions were thereby known, the French king uſed every expedient to ſupply the city with a garriſon and proviſions, and enable it to maintain a long and obſtinate ſiege. The lord of Gaucour, a brave and experienced captain, was appointed governor: Many officers of diſtinction threw themſelves into the place: The troops which they conducted were enured to war, and were determined to make the moſt obſtinate reſiſtance: And even the inhabitants, diſciplined by the long continuance of hoſtilities, were well qualified, in their own defence, to ſecond the efforts of the moſt veteran forces. The eyes of all Europe were turned towards this ſcene; where, it was reaſonably ſuppoſed, the French were to make their laſt ſtand for maintaining the independence of their monarchy, and the rights of their ſovereign.

THE earl of Saliſbury at laſt approached the place with an army, which conſiſted only of ten thouſand men; and not being able, with ſo ſmall a force, to inveſt ſo great a city, that commanded a bridge over the Loire, he ſtationed himſelf on the ſouthern ſide towards Sologne, leaving the other, towards the

[s] Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 38, 39. Polyd. Virg. p. 468.

Beauſſe,

Beauſſe, ſtill open to the enemy. He there attacked the fortifications which guarded the entrance to the bridge; and, after an obſtinate reſiſtance, he carried ſeveral of them; but was himſelf killed by a cannon ball as he was taking a view of the enemy [t]. The earl of Suffolk ſucceeded to the command; and being reinforced with great numbers of Engliſh and Burgundians, he paſſed the river with the main body of his army, and inveſted Orleans on the other ſide. As it was now the depth of winter, Suffolk, who found it difficult in that ſeaſon to throw up intrenchments all around, contented himſelf, for the preſent, with erecting redoubts at different diſtances, where his men were lodged in ſafety, and were ready to intercept the ſupplies which the enemy might attempt to throw into the place. Though he had ſeveral pieces of artillery in his camp (and this is among the firſt ſieges in Europe where cannon were found to be of importance), the art of engineering was hitherto ſo imperfect, that Suffolk truſted more to famine than to force for ſubduing the city; and he purpoſed in the ſpring to render the circumvallation more complete, by drawing intrenchments from one redoubt to another. Numberleſs feats of valour were performed both by the beſiegers and beſieged during the winter: Bold ſallies were made, and repulſed with equal boldneſs: Convoys were ſometimes introduced and often intercepted: The ſupplies were ſtill unequal to the conſumption of the place: And the Engliſh ſeemed daily, though ſlowly, to be advancing towards the completion of their enterpriſe. CHAP. XX. 1428.

But while Suffolk lay in this ſituation, the French parties ravaged all the country around; and the beſiegers, who were obliged to draw their proviſions from a diſtance, were themſelves expoſed to the danger of want and famine. Sir John Faſtolfe was bringing up a large convoy of every kind of ſtores, 1429.

[t] Hall, fol. 105. Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 39. Stowe, p. 369. Hollingſhed, p. 599. Grafton, p. 531.

which

CHAP. XX. 1429.

which he escorted with a detachment of two thousand five hundred men; when he was attacked by a body of four thousand French, under the command of the counts of Clermont and Dunois. Fastolffe drew up his troops behind the waggons; but the French generals, afraid of attacking him in that posture, planted a battery of cannon against him, which threw every thing into confusion, and would have insured them the victory, had not the impatience of some Scottish troops, who broke the line of battle, brought on an engagement, in which Fastolffe was victorious. The count of Dunois was wounded; and about five hundred French were left on the field of battle. This action, which was of great importance in the present conjuncture, was commonly called the battle of *Herrings*; because the convoy brought a great quantity of that kind of provisions, for the use of the English army during the Lent season [u].

Charles seemed now to have but one expedient for saving this city, which had been so long invested. The duke of Orleans, who was still prisoner in England, prevailed on the protector and the council to consent that all his demesnes should be allowed to preserve a neutrality during the war, and should be sequestered, for greater security, into the hands of the duke of Burgundy. This prince, who was much less cordial in the English interests than formerly, went to Paris, and made the proposal to the duke of Bedford; but the regent coldly replied, That he was not of a humour to beat the bushes, while others ran away with the game: An answer which so disgusted the duke that he recalled all the troops of Burgundy that acted in the siege [w]. The place however was every day more and more closely invested by the English: Great scarcity began already

[u] Hall, fol. 106. Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 41, 42. Stowe, p. 369. Hollingshed, p. 600. Polyd. Virg. p. 469. Grafton, p. 532.

[w] Hall, fol. 106. Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 42. Stowe, p. 369. Grafton, p. 533.

to

to be felt by the garriſon and inhabitants: Charles, in deſpair of collecting an army which ſhould dare to approach the enemy's entrenchments, not only gave the city for loſt, but began to entertain a very diſmal proſpect with regard to the general ſtate of his affairs. He ſaw that the country, in which he had hitherto, with great difficulty, ſubſiſted, would be laid entirely open to the invaſion of a powerful and victorious enemy; and he already entertained thoughts of retiring with the remains of his forces into Languedoc and Dauphiny, and defending himſelf as long as poſſible in thoſe remote provinces. But it was fortunate for this good prince, that, as he lay under the dominion of the fair, the women, whom he conſulted, had the ſpirit to ſupport his ſinking reſolution in this deſperate extremity. Mary of Anjou, his queen, a princeſs of great merit and prudence, vehemently oppoſed this meaſure, which, ſhe foreſaw, would diſcourage all his partiſans, and ſerve as a general ſignal for deſerting a prince who ſeemed himſelf to deſpair of ſucceſs. His miſtreſs too, the fair Agnes Sorel, who lived in entire amity with the queen, ſeconded all her remonſtrances, and threatened that, if he thus puſillanimouſly threw away the ſceptre of France, ſhe would ſeek in the court of England a fortune more correſpondent to her wiſhes. Love was able to rouſe in the breaſt of Charles that courage which ambition had failed to excite: He reſolved to diſpute every inch of ground with an imperious enemy; and rather to periſh with honour in the midſt of his friends, than yield ingloriouſly to his bad fortune: When relief was unexpectedly brought him by another female of a very different character, who gave riſe to one of the moſt ſingular revolutions that is to be met with in hiſtory. CHAP. XX. 1429.

The maid of Orleans.

In the village of Domremi near Vaucouleurs, on the borders of Lorraine, there lived a country girl of twenty-ſeven years of age, called Joan d'Arc, who

CHAP. XX. 1429.

who was ſervant in a ſmall inn, and who in that ſtation had been accuſtomed to tend the horſes of the gueſts, to ride them without a ſaddle to the watering place, and to perform other offices, which, in well-frequented inns, commonly fall to the ſhare of the men-ſervants [x]. This girl was of an irreproachable life, and had not hitherto been remarked for any ſingularity; whether that ſhe had met with no occaſion to excite her genius, or that the unſkilful eyes of thoſe who converſed with her, had not been able to diſcern her uncommon merit. It is eaſy to imagine, that the preſent ſituation of France was an intereſting object even to perſons of the loweſt rank, and would become the frequent ſubject of converſation: A young prince expelled his throne by the ſedition of native ſubjects, and by the arms of ſtrangers, could not fail to move the compaſſion of all his people whoſe hearts were uncorrupted by faction; and the peculiar character of Charles, ſo ſtrongly inclined to friendſhip and the tender paſſions, naturally rendered him the hero of that ſex whoſe generous minds know no bounds in their affections. The ſiege of Orleans, the progreſs of the Engliſh before that place, the great diſtreſs of the garriſon and inhabitants, the importance of ſaving this city and its brave defenders, had turned thither the public eye; and Joan, inflamed by the general ſentiment, was ſeized with a wild deſire of bringing relief to her ſovereign in his preſent diſtreſſes. Her unexperienced mind, working day and night on this favourite object, miſtook the impulſes of paſſion for heavenly inſpirations; and ſhe fancied that ſhe ſaw viſions, and heard voices, exhorting her to re-eſtabliſh the throne of France, and to expel the foreign invaders. An uncommon intrepidity of temper made her overlook all the dangers which might attend her in

[x] Hall, fol. 107. Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 42. Graſton, p. 534.

ſuch

such a path; and thinking herself destined by Heaven to this office, she threw aside all that bashfulness and timidity so natural to her sex, her years and her low station. She went to Vaucouleurs; procured admission to Baudricourt the governor; informed him of her inspirations and intentions; and conjured him not to neglect the voice of God, who spoke through her, but to second those heavenly revelations which impelled her to this glorious enterprise. Baudricourt treated her at first with some neglect; but on her frequent returns to him, and importunate solicitations, he began to remark something extraordinary in the maid, and was inclined, at all hazards, to make so easy an experiment. It is uncertain whether this gentleman had discernment enough to perceive that great use might be made with the vulgar, of so uncommon an engine; or, what is more likely, in that credulous age, was himself a convert to this visionary: But he adopted at last the schemes of Joan; and he gave her some attendants, who conducted her to the French court, which at that time resided at Chinon. CHAP. XX. 1429.

It is the business of history to distinguish between the *miraculous* and the *marvellous*; to reject the first in all narrations merely profane and human; to doubt the second; and when obliged by unquestionable testimony, as in the present case, to admit of something extraordinary, to receive as little of it as is consistent with the known facts and circumstances. It is pretended, that Joan, immediately on her admission, knew the king, though she had never seen his face before, and though he purposely kept himself in the crowd of courtiers, and had laid aside every thing in his dress and apparel which might distinguish him: That she offered him, in the name of the supreme Creator, to raise the siege of Orleans, and conduct him to Rheims to be there crowned and anointed;

CHAP. XX. 1429.

and on his expreſſing doubts of her miſſion, revealed to him, before ſome ſworn confidents, a ſecret, which was unknown to all the world beſide himſelf, and which nothing but a heavenly inſpiration could have diſcovered to her: And that ſhe demanded, as the inſtrument of her future victories, a particular ſword, which was kept in the church of St. Catharine of Fierbois, and which, though ſhe had never ſeen it, ſhe deſcribed by all its marks, and by the place in which it had long lain neglected[y]. This is certain, that all theſe miraculous ſtories were ſpread abroad, in order to captivate the vulgar. The more the king and his miniſters were determined to give into the illuſion, the more ſcruples they pretended. An aſſembly of grave doctors and theologians cautiouſly examined Joan's miſſion, and pronounced it undoubted and ſupernatural. She was ſent to the parliament, then reſiding at Poictiers; and was interrogated before that aſſembly: The preſidents, the counſellors, who came perſuaded of her impoſture, went away convinced of her inſpiration. A ray of hope began to break through that deſpair in which the minds of all men were before enveloped. Heaven had now declared itſelf in favour of France, and had laid bare its outſtretched arm to take vengeance on her invaders. Few could diſtinguiſh between the impulſe of inclination and the force of conviction; and none would ſubmit to the trouble of ſo diſagreeable a ſcrutiny.

AFTER theſe artificial precautions and preparations had been for ſome time employed, Joan's requeſts were at laſt complied with: She was armed cap-a-pee, mounted on horſeback, and ſhown in that martial habiliment before the whole people. Her dexterity in managing her ſteed, though acquired in her former occupation, was regarded as

[y] Hall, fol. 107. Hollingſhed, p. 600.

a freſh

a freſh proof of her miſſion; and ſhe was received with the loudeſt acclamations by the ſpectators. Her former occupation was even denied: She was no longer the ſervant of an inn: She was converted into a ſhepherdeſs, an employment much more agreeable to the imagination. To render her ſtill more intereſting, near ten years were ſubſtracted from her age; and all the ſentiments of love and of chivalry were thus united to thoſe of enthuſiaſm, in order to inflame the fond fancy of the people with prepoſſeſſions in her favour. CHAP. XX. 1429.

When the engine was thus dreſſed up in full ſplendour, it was determined to eſſay its force againſt the enemy. Joan was ſent to Blois, where a large convoy was prepared for the ſupply of Orleans, and an army of ten thouſand men, under the command of St. Severe, aſſembled to eſcort it. She ordered all the ſoldiers to confeſs themſelves before they ſet out on the enterpriſe: She baniſhed from the camp all women of bad fame: She diſplayed in her hands a conſecrated banner; where the Supreme Being was repreſented graſping the globe of earth, and ſurrounded with flower de luces: And ſhe inſiſted, in right of her prophetic miſſion, that the convoy ſhould enter Orleans by the direct road from the ſide of Beauſſe: But the count of Dunois, unwilling to ſubmit the rules of the military art to her inſpirations, ordered it to approach by the other ſide of the river, where, he knew, the weakeſt part of the Engliſh army was ſtationed.

Previous to this attempt, the maid had written to the regent, and to the Engliſh generals before Orleans, commanding them, in the name of the omnipotent Creator, by whom ſhe was commiſſioned, immediately to raiſe the ſiege, and to evacuate France; and menacing them with divine vengeance in caſe of their diſobedience. All the Engliſh affected to ſpeak with deriſion of the maid, and of her heavenly commiſſion; and ſaid, that

CHAP. XX. 1429.

the French king was now indeed reduced to a ſorry paſs when he had recourſe to ſuch ridiculous expedients: But they felt their imagination ſecretly ſtruck with the vehement perſuaſion which prevailed in all around them; and they waited with an anxious expectation, not unmixed with horror, for the iſſue of theſe extraordinary preparations.

As the convoy approached the river, a ſally was made by the garriſon on the ſide of Beauſſe, to pre-
29th April. vent the Engliſh general from ſending any detachment to the other ſide: The proviſions were peaceably embarked in boats, which the inhabitants of Orleans had ſent to receive them: The maid covered with her troops the embarkation: Suffolk did not venture to attack her: And the French general carried back the army in ſafety to Blois; an alteration of affairs which was already viſible to all the world, and which had a proportional effect on the minds of both parties.

THE maid entered the city of Orleans arrayed in her military garb, and diſplaying her conſecrated ſtandard; and was received as a celeſtial deliverer by all the inhabitants. They now believed themſelves invincible under her influence; and Dunois himſelf, perceiving ſuch a mighty alteration both in friends and foes, conſented that the next convoy, which was expected in a few days, ſhould enter by
4th May. the ſide of Beauſſe. The convoy approached: No ſign of reſiſtance appeared in the beſiegers: The waggons and troops paſſed without interruption between the redoubts of the Engliſh: A dead ſilence and aſtoniſhment reigned among thoſe troops, formerly ſo elated with victory, and ſo fierce for the combat.

THE earl of Suffolk was in a ſituation very unuſual and extraordinary, and which might well confound the man of the greateſt capacity and firmeſt temper. He ſaw his troops overawed, and ſtrongly impreſſed with the idea of a divine influence ac-

companying the maid. Instead of banishing these vain terrors by hurry, and action, and war, he waited till the soldiers should recover from the panic; and he thereby gave leisure for those prepossessions to sink still deeper into their minds. The military maxims, which are prudent in common cases, deceived him in these unaccountable events. The English felt their courage daunted and overwhelmed; and thence inferred a divine vengeance hanging over them. The French drew the same inference from an inactivity so new and unexpected. Every circumstance was now reversed in the opinions of men, on which all depends: The spirit resulting from a long course of uninterrupted success was on a sudden transferred from the victors to the vanquished. CHAP. XX. 1429.

The maid called aloud, that the garrison should remain no longer on the defensive; and she promised her followers the assistance of Heaven in attacking those redoubts of the enemy which had so long kept them in awe, and which they had never hitherto dared to insult. The generals seconded her ardour: An attack was made on one redoubt, and it proved successful[a]: All the English who defended the entrenchments were put to the sword, or taken prisoners: And sir John Talbot himself, who had drawn together, from the other redoubts, some troops to bring them relief, durst not appear in the open field against so formidable an enemy.

Nothing, after this success, seemed impossible to the maid and her enthusiastic votaries. She urged the generals to attack the main body of the English in their entrenchments: But Dunois, still unwilling to hazard the fate of France by too great temerity, and sensible that the least reverse of fortune would make all the present visions eva-

[a] Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 45.

CHAP. XX. 1429.

porate, and reſtore every thing to its former condition, checked her vehemence, and propoſed to her firſt to expel the enemy from their forts on the other ſide of the river, and thus lay the communication with the country entirely open, before ſhe attempted any more hazardous enterpriſe. Joan was perſuaded, and theſe forts were vigorouſly aſſailed. In one attack the French were repulſed; the maid was left almoſt alone; ſhe was obliged to retreat, and join the runaways; but diſplaying her ſacred ſtandard, and animating them with her countenance, her geſtures, her exhortations, ſhe led them back to the charge, and overpowered the Engliſh in their entrenchments. In the attack of another fort, ſhe was wounded in the neck with an arrow; ſhe retreated a moment behind the aſſailants; ſhe pulled out the arrow with her own hands; ſhe had the wound quickly dreſſed; and ſhe haſtened back to head the troops, and to plant her victorious banner on the ramparts of the enemy.

By all theſe ſucceſſes, the Engliſh were entirely chaſed from their fortifications on that ſide. They had loſt above ſix thouſand men in theſe different actions; and what was ſtill more important, their wonted courage and confidence was wholly gone, and had given place to amazement and deſpair. The maid returned triumphant over the bridge, and was again received as the guardian angel of the city. After performing ſuch miracles, ſhe convinced the moſt obdurate incredulity of her divine miſſion: Men felt themſelves animated as by a ſuperior energy, and thought nothing impoſſible to that divine hand which ſo viſibly conducted them. It was in vain even for the Engliſh generals to oppoſe with their ſoldiers the prevailing opinion of ſupernatural influence: They themſelves were probably moved by the ſame belief: The utmoſt they dared to advance was, that Joan was not an inſtrument

ment of God; she was only the implement of the Devil: But as the English had felt, to their sad experience, that the Devil might be allowed sometimes to prevail, they derived not much consolation from the enforcing of this opinion. CHAP. XX. 1429.

The siege of Orleans raised. 8th May.

It might prove extremely dangerous for Suffolk, with such intimidated troops, to remain any longer in the presence of so courageous and victorious an enemy; he therefore raised the siege, and retreated with all the precaution imaginable. The French resolved to push their conquests, and to allow the English no leisure to recover from their consternation. Charles formed a body of six thousand men, and sent them to attack Jergeau, whither Suffolk had retired with a detachment of his army. The siege lasted ten days; and the place was obstinately defended. Joan displayed her wonted intrepidity on the occasion. She descended into the fossee in leading the attack; and she there received a blow on the head with a stone, by which she was confounded and beaten to the ground: But she soon recovered herself; and in the end rendered the assault successful: Suffolk was obliged to yield himself prisoner to a Frenchman called Renaud; but, before he submitted, he asked his adversary, whether he were a gentleman? On receiving a satisfactory answer, he demanded whether he were a knight? Renaud replied, that he had not yet attained that honour. *Then I make you one*, replied Suffolk: Upon which he gave him the blow with his sword, which dubbed him into that fraternity; and he immediately surrendered himself his prisoner.

The remainder of the English army was commanded by Fastolffe, Scales, and Talbot, who thought of nothing but of making their retreat, as soon as possible, into a place of safety; while the French esteemed the overtaking them equivalent to a victory. So much had the events which passed

CHAP. XX.

1429. 18th June.

before Orleans altered every thing between the two nations! The vanguard of the French, under Richemont and Xaintrailles, attacked the rear of the enemy at the village of Patay. The battle laſted not a moment: The Engliſh were diſcomfited, and fled: The brave Faſtolffe himſelf ſhowed the example of flight to his troops; and the order of the garter was taken from him, as a puniſhment for this inſtance of cowardice[b]. Two thouſand men were killed in this action, and both Talbot and Scales taken priſoners.

In the account of all theſe ſucceſſes, the French writers, to magnify the wonder, repreſent the maid (who was now known by the appellation of *the Maid of Orleans*) as not only active in combat, but as performing the office of general; directing the troops, conducting the military operations, and ſwaying the deliberations in all councils of war. It is certain, that the policy of the French court endeavoured to maintain this appearance with the public: But it is much more probable, that Dunois and the wiſer commanders prompted her in all her meaſures, than that a country girl, without experience or education, could, on a ſudden, become expert in a profeſſion which requires more genius and capacity than any other active ſcene of life. It is ſufficient praiſe that ſhe could diſtinguiſh the perſons on whoſe judgment ſhe might rely; that ſhe could ſeize their hints and ſuggeſtions, and, on a ſudden, deliver their opinions as her own; and that ſhe could curb, on occaſion, that viſionary and enthuſiaſtic ſpirit with which ſhe was actuated, and could temper it with prudence and diſcretion.

The raiſing of the ſiege of Orleans was one part of the maid's promiſe to Charles: the crowning of him at Rheims was the other: And ſhe now vehemently inſiſted that he ſhould forthwith ſet out on

[b] Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 46.

that

that enterprise. A few weeks before, such a proposal would have appeared the most extravagant in the world. Rheims lay in a distant quarter of the kingdom; was then in the hands of a victorious enemy; the whole road which led to it was occupied by their garrisons; and no man could be so sanguine as to imagine that such an attempt could so soon come within the bounds of possibility. But as it was extremely the interest of Charles to maintain the belief of something extraordinary and divine in these events, and to avail himself of the present consternation of the English, he resolved to follow the exhortations of his warlike prophetess, and to lead his army upon this promising adventure. Hitherto he had kept remote from the scene of war: As the safety of the state depended upon his person, he had been persuaded to restrain his military ardour: But observing this prosperous turn of affairs, he now determined to appear at the head of his armies, and to set the example of valour to all his soldiers. And the French nobility saw at once their young sovereign assuming a new and more brilliant character, seconded by fortune and conducted by the hand of Heaven; and they caught fresh zeal to exert themselves in replacing him on the throne of his ancestors. CHAP. XX. 1429.

CHARLES set out for Rheims at the head of twelve thousand men: He passed by Troye, which opened its gates to him: Chalons imitated the example: Rheims sent him a deputation with its keys, before his approach to it: And he scarcely perceived, as he passed along, that he was marching through an enemy's country. The ceremony of his coronation was here performed[c] with the holy oil, which a pigeon had brought to king Clovis from Heaven on the first establishment of the French monarchy: The maid of Orleans stood by his side in complete armour, and displayed her sacred banner, which had The king of France crowned at Rheims. 17th July.

[c] Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 48.

CHAP. XX. 1429.

so often dissipated and confounded his fiercest enemies: And the people shouted with the most unfeigned joy on viewing such a complication of wonders. After the completion of the ceremony, the maid threw herself at the king's feet, embraced his knees, and with a flood of tears, which pleasure and tenderness extorted from her, she congratulated him on this singular and marvellous event.

CHARLES, thus crowned and anointed, became more respectable in the eyes of all his subjects, and seemed, in a manner, to receive anew, from a heavenly commission, his title to their allegiance. The inclinations of men swaying their belief, no one doubted of the inspirations and prophetic spirit of the maid: So many incidents, which passed all human comprehension, left little room to question a superior influence: And the real and und o bted facts brought credit to every exaggeration, which could scarcely be rendered more wonderful. Laon, Soissons, Chateau-Thierri, Provins, and many other towns and fortresses in that neighbourhood, immediately after Charles's coronation submitted to him on the first summons; and the whole nation was disposed to give him the most zealous testimonies of their duty and affection.

Prudence of the duke of Bedford.

NOTHING can impress us with a higher idea of the wisdom, address, and resolution of the duke of Bedford, than his being able to maintain himself in so perilous a situation, and to preserve some footing in France, after the defection of so many places, and amidst the universal inclination of the rest to imitate that contagious example. This prince seemed present every where by his vigilance and foresight: He employed every resource which fortune had yet left him: He put all the English garrisons in a posture of defence: He kept a watchful eye over every attempt among the French towards an insurrection: He retained the Parisians in obedience, by alternately employing caresses and severity: And knowing

ing that the duke of Burgundy was already wavering in his fidelity, he acted with so much skill and prudence, as to renew, in this dangerous crisis, his alliance with that prince; an alliance of the utmost importance to the credit and support of the English government. CHAP. XX. 1429.

The small supplies which he received from England set the talents of this great man in still a stronger light. The ardour of the English for foreign conquests was now extremely abated by time and reflection: The parliament seems even to have become sensible of the danger which might attend their farther progress: No supply of money could be obtained by the regent during his greatest distresses: And men enlisted slowly under his standard, or soon deserted, by reason of the wonderful accounts which had reached England, of the magic, and sorcery, and diabolical power of the maid of Orleans [d]. It happened fortunately, in this emergency, that the bishop of Winchester, now created a cardinal, landed at Calais with a body of five thousand men, which he was conducting into Bohemia, on a crusade against the Hussites. He was persuaded to lend these troops to his nephew during the present difficulties [e]; and the regent was thereby enabled to take the field, and to oppose the French king, who was advancing with his army to the gates of Paris.

The extraordinary capacity of the duke of Bedford appeared also in his military operations. He attempted to restore the courage of his troops by boldly advancing to the face of the enemy; but he chose his posts with so much caution, as always to decline a combat, and to render it impossible for Charles to attack him. He still attended that prince in all his movements; covered his own towns and garrisons; and kept himself in a posture to reap advantage from every imprudence or false step of the

[d] Rymer, vol. x. p. 459. 472. [e] Ibid. vol. x. p. 421.

enemy,

CHAP. XX. 1430.

enemy. The French army, which consisted mostly of volunteers, who served at their own expence, soon after retired, and was disbanded: Charles went to Bourges, the ordinary place of his residence; but not till he made himself master of Compiegne, Beauvais, Senlis, Sens, Laval, Lagni, St. Denis, and of many places in the neighbourhood of Paris, which the affections of the people had put into his hands.

The regent endeavoured to revive the declining state of his affairs by bringing over the young king of England, and having him crowned and anointed at Paris[f]. All the vassals of the crown who lived within the provinces possessed by the English, swore a new allegiance, and did homage to him. But this ceremony was cold and insipid, compared with the lustre which had attended the coronation of Charles at Rheims; and the duke of Bedford expected more effect from an accident, which put into his hands the person that had been the author of all his calamities.

The maid of Orleans, after the coronation of Charles, declared to the count of Dunois, that her wishes were now fully gratified, and that she had no farther desire than to return to her former condition, and to the occupation and course of life which became her sex: But that nobleman, sensible of the great advantages which might still be reaped from her presence in the army, exhorted her to persevere, till, by the final expulsion of the English, she had brought all her prophecies to their full completion. In pursuance of this advice, she threw herself into the town of Compiegne, which was at that time besieged by the duke of Burgundy, assisted by the earls of Arundel and Suffolk; and the garrison, on her appearance, believed themselves thenceforth invincible. But their joy was of short duration. The 24th May. maid, next day after her arrival, headed a sally upon

[f] Rymer, vol. x. p. 432.

the

the quarters of John of Luxembourg; ſhe twice drove the enemy from their entrenchments; finding their numbers to increaſe every moment, ſhe ordered a retreat; when hard preſſed by the purſuers, ſhe turned upon them, and made them again recoil; but being here deſerted by her friends, and ſurrounded by the enemy, ſhe was at laſt, after exerting the utmoſt valour, taken priſoner by the Burgundians [g]. The common opinion was, that the French officers, finding the merit of every victory aſcribed to her, had, in envy to her renown, by which they themſelves were ſo much eclipſed, willingly expoſed her to this fatal accident. CHAP. XX. 1430.

THE envy of her friends, on this occaſion, was not a greater proof of her merit than the triumph of her enemies. A complete victory would not have given more joy to the Engliſh and their partiſans. The ſervice of *Te Deum*, which has ſo often been profaned by princes, was publicly celebrated, on this fortunate event, at Paris. The duke of Bedford fancied, that, by the captivity of that extraordinary woman, who had blaſted all his ſucceſſes, he ſhould again recover his former aſcendant over France; and, to puſh farther the preſent advantage, he purchaſed the captive from John of Luxembourg, and formed a proſecution againſt her, which, whether it proceeded from vengeance or policy, was equally barbarous and diſhonourable.

THERE was no poſſible reaſon, why Joan ſhould not be regarded as a priſoner of war, and be entitled to all the courteſy and good uſages which civilized nations practiſe towards enemies on theſe occaſions. She had never, in her military capacity, forfeited, by any act of treachery or cruelty, her claim to that treatment: She was unſtained by any civil crime: Even the virtues and the very decorums of her ſex had ever been rigidly obſerved by her: And though 1431.

[g] Stowe, p. 371.

her

CHAP. XX. 1431.

her appearing in war, and leading armies to battle, may seem an exception, she had thereby performed such signal service to her prince, that she had abundantly compensated for this irregularity; and was, on that very account, the more an object of praise and admiration. It was necessary, therefore, for the duke of Bedford to interest religion some way in the prosecution; and to cover, under that cloak, his violation of justice and humanity.

The bishop of Beauvais, a man wholly devoted to the English interests, presented a petition against Joan, on pretence that she was taken within the bounds of his diocese; and he desired to have her tried by an ecclesiastical court for sorcery, impiety, idolatry, and magic: The university of Paris was so mean as to join in the same request: Several prelates, among whom the cardinal of Winchester was the only Englishman, were appointed her judges: They held their court in Roüen, where the young king of England then resided: And the maid, clothed in her former military apparel, but loaded with irons, was produced before this tribunal.

She first desired to be eased of her chains: Her judges answered, that she had once already attempted an escape, by throwing herself from a tower: She confessed the fact, maintained the justice of her intention, and owned that, if she could, she would still execute that purpose. All her other speeches shewed the same firmness and intrepidity: Though harassed with interrogatories during the course of near four months, she never betrayed any weakness or womanish submission; and no advantage was gained over her. The point, which her judges pushed most vehemently, was her visions and revelations, and intercourse with departed saints; and they asked her, whether she would submit to the church the truth of these inspirations: She replied, that she would submit them to God, the fountain of truth. They then exclaimed, that she was a heretic,

tic, and denied the authority of the church. She appealed to the pope: They rejected her appeal. CHAP. XX. 1431.

THEY aſked her, why ſhe put truſt in her ſtandard, which had been conſecrated by magical incantations: She replied, that ſhe put truſt in the Supreme Being alone, whoſe image was impreſſed upon it. They demanded, why ſhe carried in her hand that ſtandard at the anointment and coronation of Charles at Rheims: She anſwered, that the perſon who had ſhared the danger, was entitled to ſhare the glory. When accuſed of going to war, contrary to the decorums of her ſex, and of aſſuming government and command over men; ſhe ſcrupled not to reply, that her ſole purpoſe was to defeat the Engliſh, and to expel them the kingdom. In the iſſue, ſhe was condemned for all the crimes of which ſhe had been accuſed, aggravated by hereſy; her revelations were declared to be inventions of the devil to delude the people; and ſhe was ſentenced to be delivered over to the ſecular arm.

JOAN, ſo long ſurrounded by inveterate enemies, who treated her with every mark of contumely; brow-beaten and overawed by men of ſuperior rank, and men inveſted with the enſigns of a ſacred character, which ſhe had been accuſtomed to revere, felt her ſpirit at laſt ſubdued; and thoſe viſionary dreams of inſpiration, in which ſhe had been buoyed up by the triumphs of ſucceſs and the applauſes of her own party, gave way to the terrors of that puniſhment to which ſhe was ſentenced. She publicly declared herſelf willing to recant; ſhe acknowledged the illuſion of thoſe revelations which the church had rejected; and ſhe promiſed never more to maintain them. Her ſentence was then mitigated: She was condemned to perpetual impriſonment, and to be fed during life on bread and water.

ENOUGH was now done to fulfil all political views, and to convince both the French and the Engliſh, that the opinion of divine influence, which had ſo much

CHAP. XV.

1431. much encouraged the one and daunted the other, was entirely without foundation. But the barbarous vengeance of Joan's enemies was not satisfied with this victory. Suspecting, that the female dress, which she had now consented to wear, was disagreeable to her, they purposely placed in her apartment a suit of men's apparel; and watched for the effects of that temptation upon her. On the sight of a dress in which she had acquired so much renown, and which, she once believed, she wore by the particular appointment of Heaven, all her former ideas and passions revived; and she ventured in her solitude to clothe herself again in the forbidden garment. Her insidious enemies caught her in that situation: Her fault was interpreted to be no less than a relapse into heresy: No recantation would now suffice, and no pardon could be granted her. She was condemned to be burned in the market-place of Roüen; and the infamous sentence was accordingly executed. This admirable heroine, to whom the more generous superstition of the ancients would have erected altars, was, on pretence of heresy and magic, delivered over alive to the flames, and expiated, by that dreadful punishment, the signal services which she had rendered to her prince and to her native country.

Execution of the Maid of Orleans.

14th June.

1432. The affairs of the English, far from being advanced by this execution, went every day more and more to decay: The great abilities of the regent were unable to resist the strong inclination which had seized the French, to return under the obedience of their rightful sovereign, and which that act of cruelty was ill fitted to remove. Chartres was surprised by a stratagem of the count of Dunois: A body of the English, under lord Willoughby, was defeated at St. Celerin upon the Sarte[h]: The fair in the suburbs of Caën, seated in the midst of the

h Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 100.

English

Engliſh territories, was pillaged by de Lore, a French officer: The duke of Bedford himſelf was obliged by Dunois to raiſe the ſiege of Lagni, with ſome loſs of reputation: And all theſe misfortunes, though light, yet being continued and uninterrupted, brought diſcredit on the Engliſh, and menaced them with an approaching revolution. But the chief detriment which the regent ſuſtained, was by the death of his ducheſs, who had hitherto preſerved ſome appearance of friendſhip between him and her brother, the duke of Burgundy[i]: And his marriage ſoon afterwards, with Jaqueline of Luxembourg, was the beginning of a breach between them[k]. Philip complained, that the regent had never had the civility to inform him of his intentions, and that ſo ſudden a marriage was a ſlight on his ſiſter's memory. The cardinal of Wincheſter mediated a reconciliation between theſe princes, and brought both of them to St. Omer's for that purpoſe. The duke of Bedford here expected the firſt viſit, both as he was ſon, brother, and uncle to a king, and becauſe he had already made ſuch advances as to come into the duke of Burgundy's territories, in order to have an interview with him: But Philip, proud of his great power and independent dominions, refuſed to pay this compliment to the regent: And the two princes, unable to adjuſt the ceremonial, parted without ſeeing each other[l]. A bad prognoſtic of their cordial intentions to renew paſt amity!

CHAP. XX. 1432.

NOTHING could be more repugnant to the intereſts of the houſe of Burgundy, than to unite the crowns of France and England on the ſame head; an event which, had it taken place, would have reduced the duke to the rank of a petty prince, and have rendered his ſituation entirely dependant and precarious. The title alſo to the crown of France,

Defection of the duke Burgundy.

i Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 87. k Stowe, p. 373. Grafton, p. 554.
l Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 90. Grafton, p. 561.

which,

CHAP. XX. 1432. which, after the failure of the elder branches, might accrue to the duke or his poſterity, had been ſacrificed by the treaty of Troye; and ſtrangers and enemies were thereby irrevocably fixed upon the throne. Revenge alone had carried Philip into theſe impolitic meaſures; and a point of honour had hitherto induced him to maintain them. But as it is the nature of paſſion gradually to decay, while the ſenſe of intereſt maintains a permanent influence and authority; the duke had, for ſome years, appeared ſenſibly to relent in his animoſity againſt Charles, and to hearken willingly to the apologies made by that prince for the murder of the late duke of Burgundy. His extreme youth was pleaded in his favour; his incapacity to judge for himſelf; the aſcendant gained over him by his miniſters; and his inability to reſent a deed, which, without his knowledge, had been perpetrated by thoſe under whoſe guidance he was then placed. The more to flatter the pride of Philip, the king of France had baniſhed from his court and preſence Tanegui de Chatel, and all thoſe who were concerned in that aſſaſſination; and had offered to make every other atonement which could be required of him. The diſtreſs which Charles had already ſuffered, had tended to gratify the duke's revenge; the miſeries, to which France had been ſo long expoſed, had begun to move his compaſſion; and the cries of all Europe admoniſhed him, that his reſentment, which might hitherto be deemed pious, would, if carried farther, be univerſally condemned as barbarous and unrelenting. While the duke was in this diſpoſition, every diſguſt which he received from England, made a double impreſſion upon him; the entreaties of the count of Richemont and the duke of Bourbon, who had married his two ſiſters, had weight; and he finally determined to unite himſelf to the royal family of France, from which his own was deſcended. For
1435. this purpoſe, a congreſs was appointed at Arras un-

der the mediation of deputies from the pope and the council of Baſle: The duke of Burgundy came thither in perſon: The duke of Bourbon, the count of Richemont, and other perſons of high rank, appeared as ambaſſadors from France: And the Engliſh having alſo been invited to attend, the cardinal of Wincheſter, the biſhops of Norwich and St. David's, the earls of Huntingdon and Suffolk, with others, received from the protector and council a commiſſion for that purpoſe[m]. CHAP. XX. 1435.

The conferences were held in the abbey of St. Vaaſt; and began with diſcuſſing the propoſals of the two crowns, which were ſo wide of each other as to admit of no hopes of accommodation. France offered to cede Normandy with Guienne, but both of them loaded with the uſual homage and vaſſalage to the crown. As the claims of England upon France were univerſally unpopular in Europe, the mediators declared the offers of Charles very reaſonable; and the cardinal of Wincheſter, with the other Engliſh ambaſſadors, without giving a particular detail of their demands, immediately left the congreſs. There remained nothing but to diſcuſs the mutual pretenſions of Charles and Philip. Theſe were eaſily adjuſted: The vaſſal was in a ſituation to give law to his ſuperior; and he exacted conditions, which, had it not been for the preſent neceſſity, would have been deemed, to the laſt degree, diſhonourable and diſadvantageous to the crown of France. Beſides making repeated atonements and acknowledgments for the murder of the duke of Burgundy, Charles was obliged to cede all the towns of Picardy which lay between the Somme and the Low Countries; he yielded ſeveral other territories; he agreed, that theſe and all the other dominions of Philip ſhould be held by him, during his life, without doing any homage, or ſwearing fealty to the pre- Auguſt.

[m] Rymer, vol. x. p. 611, 612.

CHAP. XX. 1435.

sent king; and he freed his subjects from all obligations to allegiance, if ever he infringed this treaty [n]. Such were the conditions upon which France purchased the friendship of the duke of Burgundy.

THE duke sent a herald to England with a letter, in which he notified the conclusion of the treaty of Arras, and apologised for his departure from that of Troye. The council received the herald with great coldness: They even assigned him his lodgings in a shoe-maker's house, by way of insult; and the populace were so incensed, that, if the duke of Gloucester had not given him guards, his life had been exposed to danger, when he appeared in the streets. The Flemings, and other subjects of Philip, were insulted, and some of them murdered by the Londoners; and every thing seemed to tend towards a rupture between the two nations [o]. These violences was not disagreeable to the duke of Burgundy; as they afforded him a pretence for the farther measures which he intended to take against the English, whom he now regarded as implacable and dangerous enemies.

14th Sept. Death of the duke of Bedford.

A FEW days after the duke of Bedford received intelligence of this treaty, so fatal to the interests of England, he died at Roüen; a prince of great abilities, and of many virtues; and whose memory, except from the barbarous execution of the Maid of Orleans, was unsullied by any considerable blemish. Isabella, queen of France, died a little before him, despised by the English, detested by the French, and reduced in her later years to regard, with an unnatural horror, the progress and successes of her own son, in recovering possession of his kingdom. This period was also signalized by the death of the earl of Arundel [p], a great English general, who,

[n] Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 112. Grafton, p. 565.

[o] Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 120. Hollingshed, p. 612.

[p] Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 105. Hollingshed, p. 610.

though

though he commanded three thouſand men, was foiled by Xaintrailles at the head of ſix hundred, and ſoon after expired of the wounds which he received in the action. CHAP. XX.

THE violent factions, which prevailed between the duke of Gloceſter and the cardinal of Wincheſter, prevented the Engliſh from taking the proper meaſures for repairing theſe multiplied loſſes, and threw all their affairs into confuſion. The popularity of the duke, and his near relation to the crown, gave him advantages in the conteſt, which he often loſt by his open and unguarded temper, unfit to ſtruggle with the politic and intereſted ſpirit of his rival. The balance, meanwhile, of theſe parties kept every thing in ſuſpenſe: Foreign affairs were much neglected: And though the duke of York, ſon to that earl of Cambridge who was executed in the beginning of the laſt reign, was appointed ſucceſſor to the duke of Bedford, it was ſeven months before his commiſſion paſſed the ſeals; and the Engliſh remained ſo long in an enemy's country, without a proper head or governor. 1436.

THE new governor, on his arrival, found the capital already loſt. The Pariſians had always been more attached to the Burgundian than to the Engliſh intereſt; and after the concluſion of the treaty of Arras, their affections, without any farther control, univerſally led them to return to their allegiance under their native ſovereign. The conſtable, together with Lile-Adam, the ſame perſon who had before put Paris into the hands of the duke of Burgundy, was introduced in the night-time by intelligence with the citizens: Lord Willoughby, who commanded only a ſmall garriſon of 1500 men, was expelled: This nobleman diſcovered valour and preſence of mind on the occaſion; but unable to guard ſo large a place againſt ſuch multitudes, he retired into the Baſtile, and being there inveſted, he delivered up that fortreſs, and was contented to ſtipu- Decline of the Engliſh in France.

CHAP. XX.

late for the safe retreat of his troops into Normandy [q].

1436. In the same season, the duke of Burgundy openly took part against England, and commenced hostilities by the siege of Calais, the only place which now gave the English any sure hold of France, and still rendered them dangerous. As he was beloved among his own subjects, and had acquired the epithet of *Good*, from his popular qualities, he was able to interest all the inhabitants of the Low Countries in the success of this enterprise; and he invested that place with an army, formidable from its numbers, but without experience, discipline, or military spirit [r]. On the first alarm of this siege, the duke of Gloucester assembled some forces, sent a defiance to Philip, and challenged him to wait the event of a battle, which he promised to give, as soon as the wind would permit him to reach Calais. The warlike genius of the English had at that time rendered them terrible to all the northern parts of Europe; especially to the Flemings, who were more expert in manufactures than in arms; and the duke of Burgundy, being already foiled in some attempts before Calais, and observing the discontent and terror of his own army, thought proper to raise the siege, and to retreat before the arrival of the enemy [s].

26th June. The English were still masters of many fine provinces in France; but retained possession, more by the extreme weakness of Charles, than by the strength of their own garrisons, or the force of their armies. Nothing indeed can be more surprising than the feeble efforts made, during the course of several years, by these two potent nations against each other; while the one struggled for independence, and the other aspired to a total conquest of its

[q] Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 127. Grafton, p. 568. [r] Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 126. 130. 132. Hollingshed, p. 613. Grafton, p. 571. [s] Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 136. Hollingshed, p. 614.

rival. The general want of induſtry, commerce, and police, in that age, had rendered all the European nations, and France and England, no leſs than the others, unfit for bearing the burthens of war, when it was prolonged beyond one ſeaſon; and the continuance of hoſtilities had, long ere this time, exhauſted the force and patience of both kingdoms. Scarcely could the appearance of an army be brought into the field on either ſide; and all the operations conſiſted in the ſurpriſal of places, in the rencounter of detached parties, and in incurſions upon the open country; which were performed by ſmall bodies, aſſembled on a ſudden from the neighbouring garriſons. In this method of conducting the war, the French king had much the advantage: The affections of the people were entirely on his ſide: Intelligence was early brought him of the ſtate and motions of the enemy: The inhabitants were ready to join in any attempts againſt the garriſons: And thus ground was continually, though ſlowly, gained upon the Engliſh. The duke of York, who was a prince of abilities, ſtruggled againſt theſe difficulties during the courſe of five years; and being aſſiſted by the valour of lord Talbot, ſoon after created earl of Shrewſbury, he performed actions which acquired him honour, but merit not the attention of poſterity. It would have been well, had this feeble war, in ſparing the blood of the people, prevented likewiſe all other oppreſſions; and had the fury of men, which reaſon and juſtice cannot reſtrain, thus happily received a check from their impotence and inability. But the French and Engliſh, though they exerted ſuch ſmall force, were, however, ſtretching beyond their reſources, which were ſtill ſmaller; and the troops, deſtitute of pay, were obliged to ſubſiſt by plundering and oppreſſing the country, both of friends and enemies. The fields in all the north of France, which

CHAP. XX. 1436.

1440

CHAP. XX. 1440.

was the ſeat of war, were laid waſte and left uncultivated [t]. The cities were gradually depopulated, not by the blood ſpilt in battle, but by the more deſtructive pillage of the garriſons [u]: And both parties, weary of hoſtilities which decided nothing, ſeemed at laſt deſirous of peace, and they ſet on foot negociations for that purpoſe. But the propoſals of France, and the demands of England, were ſtill ſo wide of each other, that all hope of accommodation immediately vaniſhed. The Engliſh ambaſſadors demanded reſtitution of all the provinces which had once been annexed to England, together with the final ceſſion of Calais and its diſtrict; and required the poſſeſſion of theſe extenſive territories without the burthen of any fealty or homage on the part of their prince: The French offered only part of Guienne, part of Normandy, and Calais, loaded with the uſual burdens. It appeared in vain to continue the negociation, while there was ſo little proſpect of agreement. The Engliſh were ſtill too haughty to ſtoop from the vaſt hopes which they had formerly entertained, and to accept of terms more ſuitable to the preſent condition of the two kingdoms.

The duke of York ſoon after reſigned his government to the earl of Warwic, a nobleman of reputation, whom death prevented from long enjoying this dignity. The duke, upon the demiſe of that nobleman, returned to his charge, and, during his adminiſtration, a truce was concluded between the king of England and the duke of Burgundy, which had become neceſſary for the commercial intereſts of

[t] Grafton, p. 562.

[u] Forteſcue, who ſoon after this period viſited France in the train of prince Henry, ſpeaks of that kingdom, as a deſert in compariſon of England. See his treatiſe *de laudibus Angliæ*. Though we make allowance for the partialities of Forteſcue, there muſt have been ſome foundation for his account; and theſe deſtructive wars are the moſt likely reaſon to be aſſigned for the difference remarked by this author.

their

their subjects [x]. The war with France continued in the same languid and feeble state as before. CHAP. XX. 1440.

THE captivity of five princes of the blood, taken prisoners in the battle of Azincour, was a considerable advantage which England long enjoyed over its enemy; but this superiority was now entirely lost. Some of these princes had died; some had been ransomed; and the duke of Orleans, the most powerful among them, was the last that remained in the hands of the English. He offered the sum of 54,000 nobles [y] for his liberty; and when this proposal was laid before the council of England, as every question was there an object of faction, the party of the duke of Gloucester, and that of the cardinal of Winchester, were divided in their sentiments with regard to it. The duke reminded the council of the dying advice of the late king, that none of these prisoners should on any account be released, till his son should be of sufficient age to hold, himself, the reins of government. The cardinal insisted on the greatness of the sum offered, which, in reality, was near equal to two-thirds of all the extraordinary supplies that the parliament, during the course of seven years, granted for the support of the war. And he added, that the release of this prince was more likely to be advantageous than prejudicial to the English interests; by filling the court of France with faction, and giving a head to those numerous malcontents whom Charles was at present able, with great difficulty, to restrain. The cardinal's party, as usual, prevailed: The duke of Orleans was released, after a melancholy captivity of twenty-five years [z]: And the duke of Burgundy,

[x] Grafton, p. 573. [y] Rymer, vol. x. p. 764. 776. 782. 795, 796. This sum was equal to 36,000 pounds sterling of our present money. A subsidy of a tenth and fifteenth was fixed by Edward III. at 29,000 pounds, which, in the reign of Henry VI. made only 58,000 pounds of our present money. The parliament granted only one subsidy during the course of seven years from 1437 to 1444. [z] Grafton, p 578.

CHAP. XX. 1440. as a pledge of his entire reconciliation with the family of Orleans, facilitated to that prince the payment of his ranſom. It muſt be confeſſed, that the princes and nobility, in thoſe ages, went to war on very diſadvantageous terms. If they were taken priſoners, they either remained in captivity during life, or purchaſed their liberty at the price which the victors were pleaſed to impoſe, and which often reduced their families to want and beggary.

1443. The ſentiments of the cardinal, ſome time after, prevailed in another point of ſtill greater moment. That prelate had always encouraged every propoſal of accommodation with France; and had repreſented the utter impoſſibility, in the preſent circumſtances, of puſhing farther the conqueſts in that kingdom, and the great difficulty of even maintaining thoſe which were already made. He inſiſted on the extreme reluctance of the parliament to grant ſupplies; the diſorders in which the Engliſh affairs in Normandy were involved; the daily progreſs made by the French king; and the advantage of ſtopping his hand by a temporary accommodation, which might leave room for time and accidents to operate in favour of the Engliſh. The duke of Gloceſter, high-ſpirited and haughty, and educated in the lofty pretenſions which the firſt ſucceſſes of his two brothers had rendered familiar to him, could not yet be induced to relinquiſh all hopes of prevailing over France; much leſs could he ſee, with patience, his own opinion thwarted and rejected by the influence of his rival in the Engliſh council. But, notwithſtanding his oppoſition, the earl of Suffolk, a nobleman who adhered to the cardinal's party, was diſpatched to Tours, in order to negociate with the French miniſters. It was found impoſſible to adjuſt the terms of a laſting peace; but a truce for twenty-two months was concluded, which left every thing on the preſent footing between the parties. The numerous diſorders under

28th May. Truce with France.

which

which the French government laboured, and which time alone could remedy, induced Charles to assent to this truce; and the same motives engaged him afterwards to prolong it[a]. But Suffolk, not content with executing this object of his commission, proceeded also to finish another business; which seems rather to have been implied than expressed in the powers that had been granted him[b]. CHAP. XX. 1443.

In proportion as Henry advanced in years, his character became fully known in the court, and was no longer ambiguous to either faction. Of the most harmless, inoffensive, simple manners; but of the most slender capacity; he was fitted both by the softness of his temper, and the weakness of his understanding, to be perpetually governed by those who surrounded him; and it was easy to foresee that his reign would prove a perpetual minority. As he had now reached the twenty-third year of his age, it was natural to think of choosing him a queen; and each party was ambitious of having him receive one from their hand; as it was probable that this circumstance would decide, for ever, the victory between them. The duke of Gloucester proposed a daughter of the count of Armagnac; but had not credit to effect his purpose. The cardinal and his friends had cast their eye on Margaret of Anjou, daughter of Regnier, titular king of Sicily, Naples, and Jerusalem, descended from the count of Anjou, brother of Charles V. who had left these magnificent titles, but without any real power or possessions, to his posterity. This princess herself was the most accomplished of her age both in body and mind; and seemed to possess those qualities which would equally qualify her to acquire the ascendant over Henry, and to supply all his defects and weaknesses. Of a masculine, courageous spirit, of an enterprising temper, endowed

[a] Rymer, vol. xi. p. 101. 108. 206. 214. [b] Ibid. p. 53.

with

CHAP. XX. 1443.

with solidity as well as vivacity of understanding, she had not been able to conceal these great talents even in the privacy of her father's family; and it was reasonable to expect, that when she should mount the throne, they would break out with still superior lustre. The earl of Suffolk, therefore, in concert with his associates of the English council, made proposals of marriage to Margaret, which were accepted. But this nobleman, besides preoccupying the princess's favour, by being the chief means of her advancement, endeavoured to ingratiate himself with her and her family, by very extraordinary concessions: Though Margaret brought no dowry with her, he ventured, of himself, without any direct authority from the council, but probably with the approbation of the cardinal and the ruling members, to engage, by a secret article, that the province of Maine, which was at that time in the hands of the English, should be ceded to Charles of Anjou, her uncle [c], who was prime minister and favourite of the French king, and who had already received from his master the grant of that province as his appanage.

Marriage of the king with Margaret of Anjou.

The treaty of marriage was ratified in England: Suffolk obtained first the title of marquis, then that of duke; and even received the thanks of parliament for his services in concluding it [d]. The princess fell immediately into close connexions with the cardinal and his party, the dukes of Somerset, Suffolk, and Buckingham [e]; who, fortified by her powerful patronage, resolved on the final ruin of the duke of Gloucester.

1447. This generous prince, worsted in all court intrigues, for which his temper was not suited; but possessing, in a high degree, the favour of the public, had already received from his rivals a cruel mortifi-

[c] Grafton, p. 590.
[d] Cotton, p. 630.
[e] Hollingshed, p. 626.

cation,

cation, which he had hitherto bornewithout violating public peace, but which it was impoſſible that a perſon of his ſpirit and humanity could ever forgive. His ducheſs, the daughter of Reginald, lord Cobham, had been accuſed of the crime of witchcraft, and it was pretended that there was found in her poſſeſſion a waxen figure of the king, which ſhe and her aſſociates, ſir Roger Bolingbroke a prieſt, and one Margery Jordan of Eye, melted in a magical manner before a ſlow fire, with an intention of making Henry's force and vigour waſte away by like inſenſible degrees. The accuſation was well calculated to affect the weak and credulous mind of the king, and to gain belief in an ignorant age; and the ducheſs was brought to trial with her confederates. The nature of this crime, ſo oppoſite to all common ſenſe, ſeems always to exempt the accuſers from obſerving the rules of common ſenſe in their evidence: The priſoners were pronounced guilty; the ducheſs was condemned to do public penance, and to ſuffer perpetual impriſonment; the others were executed[f]. But, as theſe violent proceedings were aſcribed ſolely to the malice of the duke's enemies, the people, contrary to their uſual practice in ſuch marvellous trials, acquitted the unhappy ſufferers; and encreaſed their eſteem and affection towards a prince, who was thus expoſed, without protection, to thoſe mortal injuries.

CHAP. XX. 1447.

THESE ſentiments of the public made the cardinal of Wincheſter and his party ſenſible that it was neceſſary to deſtroy a man whoſe popularity might become dangerous, and whoſe reſentment they had ſo much cauſe to apprehend. In order to effect their purpoſe, a parliament was ſummoned to meet, not at London, which was ſuppoſed to be too well

[f] Stowe, p. 381. Hollingſhed, p. 622. Graſton, 587.

affected

CHAP. XX.

1447. 28th Feb. Murder of the duke of Gloceſter.

affected to the duke, but at St. Edmondſbury, where they expected that he would lie entirely at their mercy. As ſoon as he appeared, he was accuſed of treaſon, and thrown into priſon. He was ſoon after found dead in his bed [g]; and though it was pretended that his death was natural, and though his body, which was expoſed to public view, bore no marks of outward violence, no one doubted but he had fallen a victim to the vengeance of his enemies. An artifice formerly practiſed in the caſe of Edward II. Richard II. and Thomas of Woodſtock, duke of Gloceſter, could deceive nobody. The reaſon of this aſſaſſination of the duke ſeems not, that the ruling party apprehended his acquittal in parliament on account of his innocence, which, in ſuch times, was ſeldom much regarded; but that they imagined his public trial and execution would have been more invidious than his private murder, which they pretended to deny. Some gentlemen of his retinue were afterwards tried as accomplices in his treaſons, and were condemned to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. They were hanged and cut down; but juſt as the executioner was proceeding to quarter them, their pardon was produced, and they were recovered to life [h]. The moſt barbarous kind of mercy that can poſſibly be imagined!

This prince is ſaid to have received a better education than was uſual in his age, to have founded one of the firſt public libraries in England, and to have been a great patron of learned men. Among other advantages which he reaped from this turn of mind, it tended much to cure him of credulity; of which the following inſtance is given by ſir Thomas More. There was a man who pretended, that, though he was born blind, he had recovered his ſight

[g] Grafton, p. 597. [h] Fabian Chron. anno 1447.

by

by touching the ſhrine of St. Albans. The duke, happening ſoon after to paſs that way, queſtioned the man, and ſeeming to doubt of his ſight, aſked him the colours of ſeveral cloaks, worn by perſons of his retinue. The man told them very readily. *You are a knave*, cried the prince; *had you been born blind, you could not ſo ſoon have learned to diſtinguiſh colours:* And immediately ordered him to be ſet in the ſtocks as an impoſtor [i].

CHAP. XX. 1447.

THE cardinal of Wincheſter died ſix weeks after his nephew, whoſe murder was univerſally aſcribed to him as well as to the duke of Suffolk, and which, it is ſaid, gave him more remorſe in his laſt moments, than could naturally be expected from a man hardened, during the courſe of a long life, in falſehood and in politics. What ſhare the queen had in this guilt, is uncertain; her uſual activity and ſpirit made the public conclude, with ſome reaſon, that the duke's enemies durſt not have ventured on ſuch a deed without her privity. But there happened, ſoon after, an event, of which ſhe and her favourite, the duke of Suffolk, bore inconteſtibly the whole odium.

THAT article of the marriage treaty, by which the province of Maine was to be ceded to Charles of Anjou, the queen's uncle, had probably been hitherto kept ſecret; and, during the lifetime of the duke of Gloceſter, it might have been dangerous to venture on the execution of it. But, as the court of France ſtrenuouſly inſiſted on performance, orders were now diſpatched, under Henry's hand, to ſir Francis Surienne, governor of Mans, commanding him to ſurrender that place to Charles of Anjou. Surienne, either queſtioning the authenticity of the order, or regarding his government as his ſole fortune, refuſed compliance; and it became neceſſary

[i] Grafton, p. 597.

for

CHAP. XX.

for a French army, under the count of Dunois, to lay ſiege to the city. The governor made as good
1447. a defence as his ſituation could permit; but, receiving no relief from Edmund duke of Somerſet, who was at that time governor of Normandy, he was at laſt obliged to capitulate, and to ſurrender not only Mans, but all the other fortreſſes of that province, which was thus entirely alienated from the crown of England.

1448. The bad effects of this meaſure ſtopped not here. Surienne, at the head of all his garriſons, amounting to two thouſand five hundred men, retired into Normandy, in expectation of being taken into pay, and of being quartered in ſome towns of that province. But Somerſet, who had no means of ſubſiſting ſuch a multitude, and who was probably incenſed at Surienne's diſobedience, refuſed to admit him; and this adventurer, not daring to commit depredations on the territories either of the king of France or of England, marched into Britanny, ſeized the town of Fougeres, repaired the fortifications of Pontorſon and St. James de Beuvron, and ſubſiſted his troops by the ravages which he exerciſed on that whole province [k]. The duke of Britanny complained of this violence to the king of France, his liege lord: Charles remonſtrated with the duke of Somerſet: That nobleman replied, that the injury was done without his privity, and that he had no authority over Surienne and his companions [l]. Though this anſwer ought to have appeared ſatisfactory to Charles, who had often felt ſeverely the licentious, independent ſpirit of ſuch mercenary ſoldiers, he never would admit of the apology. He ſtill inſiſted that theſe plunderers ſhould be recalled, and that reparation

[k] Monſtrelet, vol. iii. p. 6.
[l] Monſtrelet, vol. iii. p. 7. Hollingſhed, p. 629.

ſhould

should be made to the duke of Britanny for all the damages which he had sustained: And, in order to render an accommodation absolutely impracticable, he made the estimation of damages amount to no less a sum than 1,600,000 crowns. He was sensible of the superiority which the present state of his affairs gave him over England; and he determined to take advantage of it. CHAP. XX. 1448.

No sooner was the truce concluded between the two kingdoms, than Charles employed himself, with great industry and judgment, in repairing those numberless ills to which France, from the continuance of wars both foreign and domestic, had so long been exposed. He restored the course of public justice; he introduced order into the finances; he established discipline in his troops; he repressed faction in his court; he revived the languid state of agriculture and the arts; and, in the course of a few years, he rendered his kingdom flourishing within itself, and formidable to its neighbours. Meanwhile, affairs in England had taken a very different turn. The court was divided into parties, which were enraged against each other: The people were discontented with the government: Conquests in France, which were an object more of glory than of interest, were overlooked amidst domestic incidents, which engrossed the attention of all men: The governor of Normandy, ill-supplied with money, was obliged to dismiss the greater part of his troops, and to allow the fortifications of the towns and castles to become ruinous: And the nobility and people of that province had, during the late open communication with France, enjoyed frequent opportunities of renewing connexions with their ancient master, and of concerting the means for expelling the English. The occasion, therefore, seemed favourable to Charles for breaking the truce. Normandy was at once invaded by four powerful armies; State of France.

CHAP. XX.

1448. Renewal of the war with France.

one commanded by the king himſelf; a ſecond by the duke of Britanny; a third by the duke of Alençon; and a fourth by the count of Dunois. The places opened their gates almoſt as ſoon as the French appeared before them: Verneüil, Nogent, Chateau Gaillard, Ponteau de Mer, Giſors, Mante, Vernon, Argentan, Liſieux, Fecamp, Coutances, Beleſme, Pont de l'Arche, fell in an inſtant into the hands of the enemy. The duke of Somerſet, ſo far from having an army which could take the field, and relieve theſe places, was not able to ſupply them with the neceſſary garriſons and proviſions. He retired, with the few troops of which he was maſter, into Roüen; and thought it ſufficient, if, till the arrival of ſuccours from England, he could ſave that capital from the general fate of the province. The king of France, at the head of a formidable army, fifty thouſand ſtrong, preſented itſelf before the gates: The dangerous example of revolt had infected the inhabitants; and they called aloud for a capitulation. Somerſet, unable to reſiſt, at once, both the enemies within and from without, retired with his garriſon into the palace and caſtle; which, being places not tenable, he was obliged to ſur-

4th Nov.

render: He purchaſed a retreat to Harfleur by the payment of 56,000 crowns, by engaging to ſurrender Arques, Tancarville, Caudebec, Honfleur, and other places in the higher Normandy, and by delivering hoſtages for the performance of articles [m]. The governor of Honfleur refuſed to obey his orders; upon which the earl of Shrewſbury, who was one of the hoſtages, was detained priſoner; and the Engliſh were thus deprived of the only general capable of recovering them from their preſent diſtreſſed ſituation. Harfleur made a better defence under ſir Thomas Curſon the governor; but was

[m] Monſtrelet, vol. iii. p. 21. Grafton, p. 643.

finally

finally obliged to open its gates to Dunois. Succours at last appeared from England under sir Thomas Kyriel, and landed at Cherbourgh: But these came very late, amounted only to 4000 men, and were soon after put to rout at Fourmigni by the count of Clermont [n]. This battle, or rather skirmish, was the only action fought by the English for the defence of their dominions in France, which they had purchased at such an expence of blood and treasure. Somerset, shut up in Caën without any prospect of relief, found it necessary to capitulate: Falaise opened its gates, on condition that the earl of Shrewsbury should be restored to liberty: And Cherbourgh, the last place of Normandy which remained in the hands of the English, being delivered up, the conquest of that important province was finished in a twelvemonth by Charles, to the great joy of the inhabitants and of his whole kingdom [o].

CHAP. XX. 1450.

A LIKE rapid success attended the French arms in Guienne; though the inhabitants of that province were, from long custom, better inclined to the English government. Dunois was dispatched thither, and met with no resistance in the field, and very little from the towns. Great improvements had been made, during this age, in the structure and management of artillery, and none in fortification; and the art of defence was by that means more unequal, than either before or since, to the art of attack. After all the small places about Bourdeaux were reduced, that city agreed to submit, if not relieved by a certain time; and as no one in England thought seriously of these distant concerns, no relief appeared; the place surrendered; and Bayonne being taken soon after, this whole province, which had remained united to

The English expelled France.

[n] Hollingshed, p. 631. [o] Grafton, p. 646.

CHAP. XX. 1450.

England since the acceſſion of Henry II. was, after a period of three centuries, finally ſwallowed up in the French monarchy.

THOUGH no peace or truce was concluded between France and England, the war was, in a manner, at an end. The Engliſh, torn in pieces by the civil diſſenſions which enſued, made but one feeble effort more for the recovery of Guienne: And Charles, occupied at home in regulating the government, and fencing againſt the intrigues of his factious ſon, Lewis the Dauphin, ſcarcely ever attempted to invade them in their iſland, or to retaliate upon them, by availing himſelf of their inteſtine confuſions.

CHAP. XXI.

HENRY VI.

Claim of the duke of York to the crown——The earl of Warwic——Impeachment of the duke of Suffolk ——His baniſhment—and death——Popular inſurrection——The parties of York and Lancaſter—— Firſt armament of the duke of York——Firſt Battle of St Alban's——Battle of Blore-heath —of Northampton —— A parliament —— Battle of Wakefield——Death of the duke of York—— Battle of Mortimer's Croſs——Second Battle of St. Alban's——Edward IV. *aſſumes the crown ——Miſcellaneous tranſactions of this reign.*

A WEAK prince, ſeated on the throne of England, had never failed, how gentle ſoever and innocent, to be infeſted with faction, diſcontent, rebellion, and civil commotions; and as the incapacity of Henry appeared every day in a fuller light, theſe dangerous conſequences began, from paſt experience, to be univerſally and juſtly apprehended. Men alſo of unquiet ſpirits, no longer employed in foreign wars, whence they were now excluded by the ſituation of the neighbouring ſtates, were the more likely to excite inteſtine diſorders, and, by their emulation, rivalſhip, and animoſities, to tear the bowels of their native country. But though theſe cauſes alone were ſufficient to breed confuſion, there concurred another circumſtance of the moſt dangerous nature: A pretender to the crown appeared: The title itſelf of the weak prince, who enjoyed the name of ſovereignty, was diſ-

CHAP. XXI. 1450.

 puted:

CHAP. XXI. 1450.

puted: And the Engliſh were now to pay the ſevere, though late, penalty of their turbulence under Richard II. and of their levity in violating, without any neceſſity or juſt reaſon, the lineal ſucceſſion of their monarchs.

Claim of the duke of York to the crown.

ALL the males of the houſe of Mortimer were extinct; but Anne, the ſiſter of the laſt earl of Marche, having eſpouſed the earl of Cambridge, beheaded in the reign of Henry V. had tranſmitted her latent, but not yet forgotten, claim to her ſon, Richard duke of York. This prince, thus deſcended by his mother from Philippa, only daughter of the duke of Clarence, ſecond ſon of Edward III. ſtood plainly in the order of ſucceſſion before the king, who derived his deſcent from the duke of Lancaſter, third ſon of that monarch; and that claim could not, in many reſpects, have fallen into more dangerous hands than thoſe of the duke of York. Richard was a man of valour and abilities, of a prudent conduct and mild diſpoſitions: He had enjoyed an opportunity of diſplaying theſe virtues in his government of France: And though recalled from that command by the intrigues and ſuperior intereſt of the duke of Somerſet, he had been ſent to ſuppreſs a rebellion in Ireland; had ſucceeded much better in that enterpriſe than his rival in the defence of Normandy; and had even been able to attach to his perſon and family the whole Iriſh nation, whom he was ſent to ſubdue [p]. In the right of his father, he bore the rank of firſt prince of the blood; and by this ſtation he gave a luſtre to his title derived from the family of Mortimer, which, though of great nobility, was equalled by other families in the kingdom, and had been eclipſed by the royal deſcent of the houſe of Lancaſter. He poſſeſſed an immenſe fortune from the union of ſo many ſucceſſions, thoſe of Cambridge and York on the one

[p] Stowe, p. 387.

hand,

hand, with those of Mortimer on the other: Which last inheritance had before been augmented by an union of the estates of Clarence and Ulster with the patrimonial possessions of the family of Marche. The alliances too of Richard, by his marrying the daughter of Ralph Nevil earl of Westmoreland, had widely extended his interest among the nobility, and had procured him many connexions in that formidable order. CHAP. XXI. 1450.

THE family of Nevil was, perhaps, at this time the most potent, both from their opulent possessions, and from the characters of the men, that has ever appeared in England. For, besides the earl of Westmoreland, and the lords Latimer, Fauconberg, and Abergavenny; the earls of Salisbury and Warwic were of that family, and were of themselves, on many accounts, the greatest noblemen in the kingdom. The earl of Salisbury, brother-in-law to the duke of York, was the eldest son by a second marriage of the earl of Westmoreland; and inherited by his wife, daughter and heir of Montacute earl of Salisbury, killed before Orleans, the possessions and title of that great family. His eldest son, Richard, had married Anne, the daughter and heir of Beauchamp earl of Warwic, who died governor of France; and by this alliance he enjoyed the possessions, and had acquired the title, of that other family, one of the most opulent, most ancient, and most illustrious in England. The personal qualities also of these two earls, especially of Warwic, enhanced the splendour of their nobility, and increased their influence over the people. This latter nobleman, commonly known, from the subsequent events, by the appellation of the *King-maker*, had distinguished himself by his gallantry in the field, by the hospitality of his table, by the magnificence, and still more by the generosity of his expence, and by the spirited and bold manner which attended him in all his actions. The undesigning frankness The earl of Warwic.

CHAP. XXI. 1450.

and openneſs of his character rendered his conqueſt over men's affections the more certain and infallible: His preſents were regarded as ſure teſtimonies of eſteem and friendſhip; and his profeſſions as the overflowings of his genuine ſentiments. No leſs than 30,000 perſons are ſaid to have daily lived at his board in the different manors and caſtles which he poſſeſſed in England: The military men, allured by his munificence and hoſpitality, as well as by his bravery, were zealouſly attached to his intereſts: The people in general bore him an unlimited affection: His numerous retainers were more devoted to his will, than to the prince or to the laws: And he was the greateſt, as well as the laſt, of thoſe mighty barons, who formerly overawed the crown, and rendered the people incapable of any regular ſyſtem of civil government.

But the duke of York, beſides the family of Nevil, had many other partiſans among the great nobility. Courtney earl of Devonſhire, deſcended from a very noble family of that name in France, was attached to his intereſts: Moubray duke of Norfolk had, from his hereditary hatred to the family of Lancaſter, embraced the ſame party: And the diſcontents, which univerſally prevailed among the people, rendered every combination of the great the more dangerous to the eſtabliſhed government.

Though the people were never willing to grant the ſupplies neceſſary for keeping poſſeſſion of the conquered provinces in France, they repined extremely at the loſs of theſe boaſted acquiſitions; and fancied, becauſe a ſudden irruption could make conqueſts, that, without ſteady counſels, and a uniform expence, it was poſſible to maintain them. The voluntary ceſſion of Maine to the queen's uncle had made them ſuſpect treachery in the loſs of Normandy and Guienne. They ſtill conſidered Margaret as a French woman and a latent enemy of the

kingdom. And when they saw her father and all her relations active in promoting the success of the French, they could not be persuaded that she, who was all powerful in the English council, would very zealously oppose them in their enterprises. CHAP. XXI. 1450.

But the most fatal blow given to the popularity of the crown, and to the interests of the house of Lancaster, was by the assassination of the virtuous duke of Gloucester, whose character, had he been alive, would have intimidated the partisans of York; but whose memory, being extremely cherished by the people, served to throw an odium on all his murderers. By this crime the reigning family suffered a double prejudice: It was deprived of its firmest support; and it was loaded with all the infamy of that imprudent and barbarous assassination.

As the duke of Suffolk was known to have had an active hand in the crime, he partook deeply of the hatred attending it; and the clamours, which necessarily rose against him, as prime minister, and declared favourite of the queen, were thereby augmented to a tenfold pitch, and became absolutely uncontrollable. The great nobility could ill brook to see a subject exalted above them; much more one who was only great grandson to a merchant, and who was of a birth so much inferior to theirs. The people complained of his arbitrary measures; which were, in some degree, a necessary consequence of the irregular power then possessed by the prince, but which the least disaffection easily magnified into tyranny. The great acquisitions which he daily made were the object of envy; and as they were gained at the expence of the crown, which was itself reduced to poverty, they appeared, on that account, to all indifferent persons, the more exceptionable and invidious.

The revenues of the crown, which had long been disproportioned to its power and dignity, had been

CHAP. XXI. 1450.

extremely dilapidated during the minority of Henry [q]; both by the rapacity of the courtiers, which the king's uncles could not control, and by the neceſſary expences of the French war, which had always been very ill ſupplied by the grants of parliament. The royal demeſnes were diſſipated; and at the ſame time the king was loaded with a debt of 372,000 pounds, a ſum ſo great, that the parliament could never think of diſcharging it. This unhappy ſituation forced the miniſters upon many arbitrary meaſures: The houſehold itſelf could not be ſupported without ſtretching to the utmoſt the right of purveyance, and rendering it a kind of univerſal robbery upon the people: The public clamour roſe high upon this occaſion, and no one had the equity to make allowance for the neceſſity of the king's ſituation. Suffolk, once become odious, bore the blame of the whole; and every grievance, in every part of the adminiſtration, was univerſally imputed to his tyranny and injuſtice.

Impeachment of the duke of Suffolk.

THIS nobleman, ſenſible of the public hatred under which he laboured, and foreſeeing an attack from the commons, endeavoured to overawe his enemies by boldly preſenting himſelf to the charge, and by inſiſting upon his own innocence, and even upon his merits, and thoſe of his family, in the public ſervice. He roſe in the houſe of peers; took notice of the clamours propagated againſt him; and complained, that, after ſerving the crown in thirty-four campaigns; after living abroad ſeventeen years without once returning to his native country; after loſing a father and three brothers in the wars with France; after being himſelf a priſoner, and purchaſing his liberty by a great ranſom; it ſhould yet be ſuſpected, that he had been debauched from his allegiance by that enemy whom he had ever oppoſed with ſuch zeal and fortitude,

[q] Cotton, p. 609.

and

and that he had betrayed his prince, who had rewarded his services by the highest honours and greatest offices that it was in his power to confer [r]. This speech did not answer the purpose intended. The commons, rather provoked at his challenge, opened their charge against him, and sent up to the peers an accusation of high treason, divided into several articles. They insisted, that he had persuaded the French king to invade England with an armed force, in order to depose the king, and to place on the throne his own son, John de la Pole, whom he intended to marry to Margaret, the only daughter of the late John duke of Somerset, and to whom, he imagined, he would by that means acquire a title to the crown: That he had contributed to the release of the duke of Orleans, in hopes that that prince would assist king Charles in expelling the English from France, and recovering full possession of his kingdom: That he had afterwards encouraged that monarch to make open war on Normandy and Guienne, and had promoted his conquests by betraying the secrets of England, and obstructing the succours intended to be sent to those provinces; And that he had, without any powers or commission, promised by treaty to cede the province of Maine to Charles of Anjou, and had accordingly ceded it; which proved in the issue the chief cause of the loss of Normandy [s].

CHAP. XXI. 1450.

It is evident, from a review of these articles, that the commons adopted, without inquiry, all the popular clamours against the duke of Suffolk, and charged him with crimes, of which none but the vulgar could seriously believe him guilty. Nothing can be more incredible, than that a nobleman, so little eminent by his birth and character, could think of acquiring the crown to his family, and of deposing Henry by foreign force, and, together

[r] Cotton, p. 641. [s] Ibid. p. 642. Hall, fol. 157. Hollingshed, p. 631. Grafton, p. 607.

with

CHAP. XXI. 1450.

with him, Margaret, his patron, a princeſs of ſo much ſpirit and penetration. Suffolk appealed to many noblemen in the houſe, who knew that he had intended to marry his ſon to one of the coheirs of the earl of Warwic, and was diſappointed in his views, only by the death of that lady: And he obſerved, that Margaret of Somerſet could bring to her huſband no title to the crown; becauſe ſhe herſelf was not ſo much as comprehended in the entail ſettled by act of parliament. It is eaſy to account for the loſs of Normandy and Guienne, from the ſituation of affairs in the two kingdoms, without ſuppoſing any treachery in the Engliſh miniſters; and it may ſafely be affirmed, that greater vigour was requiſite to defend theſe provinces from the arms of Charles VII. than to conquer them at firſt from his predeceſſor. It could never be the intereſt of any Engliſh miniſter to betray and abandon ſuch acquiſitions; much leſs of one who was ſo well eſtabliſhed in his maſter's favour, who enjoyed ſuch high honours and ample poſſeſſions in his own country, who had nothing to dread but the effects of popular hatred, and who could never think, without the moſt extreme reluctance, of becoming a fugitive and exile in a foreign land. The only article which carries any face of probability, is his engagement for the delivery of Maine to the queen's uncle: But Suffolk maintained, with great appearance of truth, that this meaſure was approved of by ſeveral at the council table[t]; and it ſeems hard to aſcribe to it, as is done by the commons, the ſubſequent loſs of Normandy, and expulſion of the Engliſh. Normandy lay open on every ſide to the invaſion of the French: Maine, an inland province, muſt ſoon after have fallen without any attack: And as the Engliſh poſſeſſed in other parts more fortreſſes than they could garriſon

[t] Cotton, p. 643.

or

or provide for, it seemed no bad policy to contract their force, and to render the defence practicable, by reducing it within a narrower compass. CHAP. XXI. 1450.

The commons were probably sensible that this charge of treason against Suffolk would not bear a strict scrutiny; and they therefore, soon after, sent up against him a new charge of misdemeanors, which they also divided into several articles. They affirmed, among other imputations, that he had procured exorbitant grants from the crown, had embezzled the public money, had conferred offices on improper persons, had perverted justice by maintaining iniquitous causes, and had procured pardons for notorious offenders [u]. The articles are mostly general; but are not improbable: And as Suffolk seems to have been a bad man and a bad minister, it will not be rash in us to think that he was guilty, and that many of these articles could have been proved against him. The court was alarmed at the prosecution of a favourite minister, who lay under such a load of popular prejudices; and an expedient was fallen upon to save him from present ruin. The king summoned all the lords, spiritual and temporal, to his apartment: The prisoner was produced before them, and asked what he could say in his own defence? He denied the charge; but submitted to the king's mercy: Henry expressed himself not satisfied with regard to the first impeachment for treason; but in consideration of the second, for misdemeanors, he declared, that, by virtue of Suffolk's own submission, not by any judicial authority, he banished him the kingdom during five years. The lords remained silent; but, as soon as they returned to their own house, they entered a protest, that this sentence should nowise infringe their privileges; and that, if Suffolk had insisted upon his right, and had not voluntarily submitted to the

His banishment

[u] Cotton, p. 643.

king's

CHAP. XXI. king's commands, he was entitled to a trial by his peers in parliament.

1450. It was eaſy to ſee, that theſe irregular proceedings were meant to favour Suffolk, and that, as he ſtill poſſeſſed the queen's confidence, he would, on the firſt favourable opportunity, be reſtored to his country, and be reinſtated in his former power and credit. A captain of a veſſel was therefore employed by his enemies to intercept him in his paſſ-
and death. age to France: He was ſeized near Dover; his head ſtruck off on the ſide of a long-boat; and his body thrown into the ſea[w]. No inquiry was made after the actors and accomplices in this atrocious deed of violence.

The duke of Somerſet ſucceeded to Suffolk's power in the miniſtry, and credit with the queen; and as he was the perſon under whoſe government the French provinces had been loſt, the public, who always judge by the event, ſoon made him equally the object of their animoſity and hatred. The duke of York was abſent in Ireland during all theſe tranſactions; and however it might be ſuſpected that his partiſans had excited and ſupported the proſecution againſt Suffolk, no immediate ground of complaint could, on that account, lie againſt him. But there happened, ſoon after, an incident which rouſed the jealouſy of the court, and diſcovered to them the extreme danger to which they were expoſed from the pretenſions of that popular prince.

The humours of the people, ſet afloat by the parliamentary impeachment, and by the fall of ſo great a favourite as Suffolk, broke out in various
Popular inſurrections. commotions, which were ſoon ſuppreſſed; but there aroſe one in Kent, which was attended with more dangerous conſequences. A man of low condition, one John Cade, a native of Ireland, who had been

[w] Hall, fol. 158. Hiſt. Croyland, contin. p. 525. Stowe, p. 388. Grafton, p. 610.

obliged

CHAP. XXI. 1450.

obliged to fly into France for crimes, obſerved, on his return to England, the diſcontents of the people; and he laid on them the foundation of projects which were at firſt crowned with ſurpriſing ſucceſs. He took the name of John Mortimer; intending, as is ſuppoſed, to paſs himſelf for a ſon of that ſir John Mortimer who had been ſentenced to death by parliament, and executed, in the beginning of this reign, without any trial or evidence, merely upon an indictment of high treaſon given in againſt him [x]. On the firſt mention of that popular name, the common people of Kent, to the number of 20,000, flocked to Cade's ſtandard, and he excited their zeal by publiſhing complaints againſt the numerous abuſes in government, and demanding a redreſs of grievances. The court, not yet fully ſenſible of the danger, ſent a ſmall force againſt the rioters, under the command of ſir Humphrey Stafford, who was defeated and ſlain in an action near Sevenoke [y]; and Cade, advancing with his followers towards London, encamped on Blackheath. Though elated by his victory, he ſtill maintained the appearance of moderation; and ſending to the court a plauſible liſt of grievances [z], he promiſed, that when theſe ſhould be redreſſed, and when lord Say the treaſurer and Cromer ſheriff of Kent, ſhould be puniſhed for their malverſations, he would immediately lay down his arms. The council, who obſerved that nobody was willing to fight againſt men ſo reaſonable in

[x] Stowe, p. 364. Cotton, p. 564. This author admires that ſuch a piece of injuſtice ſhould have been committed in peaceable times: He might have added, and by ſuch virtuous princes as Bedford and Gloceſter. But it is to be preſumed that Mortimer was guilty, though his condemnation was highly irregular and illegal. The people had at this time a very feeble ſenſe of law and a conſtitution; and power was very imperfectly reſtrained by theſe limits. When the proceedings of a parliament were ſo irregular, it is eaſy to imagine that thoſe of a king would be more ſo.

[y] Hall, fol. 159. Hollingſhed, p. 634. [z] Stowe, p. 388, 389. Hollingſhed, p. 633.

CHAP. XXI. 1450.

their pretenſions, carried the king, for preſent ſafety, to Kenilworth; and the city immediately opened its gates to Cade, who maintained, during ſome time, great order and diſcipline among his followers. He always led them into the field during the night-time; and publiſhed ſevere edicts againſt plunder and violence of every kind: But being obliged, in order to gratify their malevolence againſt Say and Cromer, to put theſe men to death without a legal trial [a], he found that, after the commiſſion of this crime, he was no longer maſter of their riotous diſpoſition, and that all his orders were neglected [b]. They broke into a rich houſe, which they plundered; and the citizens, alarmed at this act of violence, ſhut their gates againſt them; and being ſeconded by a detachment of ſoldiers ſent them by lord Scales, governor of the Tower, they repulſed the rebels with great ſlaughter [c]. The Kentiſhmen were ſo diſcouraged by the blow, that, upon receiving a general pardon from the primate, then chancellor, they retreated towards Rocheſter, and there diſperſed. The pardon was ſoon after annulled, as extorted by violence: A price was ſet on Cade's head [d], who was killed by one Iden, a gentleman of Suſſex; and many of his followers were capitally puniſhed for their rebellion.

It was imagined by the court, that the duke of York had ſecretly inſtigated Cade to this attempt, in order to try, by that experiment, the diſpoſitions of the people towards his title and family [e]: And as the event had ſo far ſucceeded to his wiſh, the ruling party had greater reaſon than ever to apprehend the future conſequences of his pretenſions. At the ſame time they heard that he intended to return from Ireland; and fearing that he meant to bring an armed force along with him, they iſſued

[a] Grafton, p. 612. [b] Hall, fol. 160. [c] Hiſt. Croyland, contin. p. 526. [d] Rymer, vol. xi. p. 275. [e] Cotton, p. 661. Stowe, p. 391.

orders,

orders, in the king's name, for oppoſing him, and for debarring him entrance into England[f]. But the duke refuted his enemies by coming attended with no more than his ordinary retinue: The precautions of the miniſters ſerved only to ſhew him their jealouſy and malignity againſt him: He was ſenſible that his title, by being dangerous to the king, was alſo become dangerous to himſelf: He now ſaw the impoſſibility of remaining in his preſent ſituation, and the neceſſity of proceeding forward in ſupport of his claim. His partiſans, therefore, were inſtructed to maintain, in all companies, his right by ſucceſſion, and by the eſtabliſhed laws and conſtitution of the kingdom: Theſe queſtions became every day more and more the ſubject of converſation: The minds of men were inſenſibly ſharpened againſt each other by diſputes, before they came to more dangerous extremities: And various topics were pleaded in ſupport of the pretenſions of each party.

CHAP. XXI. 1450.

The parties of Lancaſter and York.

THE partiſans of the houſe of Lancaſter maintained, that though the elevation of Henry IV. might at firſt be deemed ſomewhat irregular, and could not be juſtified by any of thoſe principles on which that prince choſe to reſt his title, it was yet founded on general conſent, was a national act, and was derived from the voluntary approbation of a free people, who, being looſened from their allegiance by the tyranny of the preceding government, were moved by gratitude, as well as by a ſenſe of public intereſt, to entruſt the ſceptre into the hands of their deliverer: That, even if that eſtabliſhment were allowed to be at firſt invalid, it had acquired ſolidity by time; the only principle which ultimately gives authority to government, and removes thoſe ſcruples which the irregular ſteps attending almoſt all revolutions naturally excite in the minds

[f] Stowe, p. 394.

of

CHAP. XXI. 1450.

of the people: That the right of ſucceſſion was a rule admitted only for general good, and for the maintenance of public order; and could never be pleaded to the overthrow of national tranquillity, and the ſubverſion of regular eſtabliſhments: That the principles of liberty, no leſs than the maxims of internal peace, were injured by theſe pretenſions of the houſe of York; and if ſo many reiterated acts of the legiſlature, by which the crown was entailed on the preſent family, were now invalidated, the Engliſh muſt be conſidered, not as a free people, who could diſpoſe of their own government, but as a troop of ſlaves, who were implicitly tranſmitted by ſucceſſion from one maſter to another: That the nation was bound to allegiance under the houſe of Lancaſter by moral, no leſs than by political duty; and were they to infringe thoſe numerous oaths of fealty which they had ſworn to Henry and his predeceſſors, they would thenceforth be thrown looſe from all principles, and it would be found difficult ever after to fix and reſtrain them: That the duke of York himſelf had frequently done homage to the king as his lawful ſovereign, and had thereby, in the moſt ſolemn manner, made an indirect renunciation of thoſe claims with which he now dares to diſturb the tranquillity of the public: That, even though the violation of the rights of blood, made on the depoſition of Richard, was perhaps raſh and imprudent, it was too late to remedy the miſchief; the danger of a diſputed ſucceſſion could no longer be obviated; the people, accuſtomed to a government, which, in the hands of the late king, had been ſo glorious, and in that of his predeceſſor ſo prudent and ſalutary, would ſtill aſcribe a right to it; by cauſing multiplied diſorders, and by ſhedding an inundation of blood, the advantage would only be obtained of exchanging one pretender for another; and the houſe of York itſelf, if eſtabliſhed on the throne, would, on the firſt opportunity,

be

be expoſed to thoſe revolutions which the giddy ſpirit excited in the people gave ſo much reaſon to apprehend: And that though the preſent king enjoyed not the ſhining talents which had appeared in his father and grandfather, he might ſtill have a ſon who ſhould be endowed with them; he is himſelf eminent for the moſt harmleſs and inoffenſive manners; and if active princes were dethroned on pretence of tyranny, and indolent ones on the plea of incapacity, there would thenceforth remain, in the conſtitution, no eſtabliſhed rule of obedience to any ſovereign. CHAP. XXI. 1450.

THESE ſtrong topics, in favour of the houſe of Lancaſter, were oppoſed by arguments no leſs convincing on the ſide of the houſe of York. The partiſans of this latter family aſſerted, that the maintenance of order in the ſucceſſion of princes, far from doing injury to the people, or invalidating their fundamental title to good government, was eſtabliſhed only for the purpoſes of government, and ſerved to prevent thoſe numberleſs confuſions which muſt enſue, if no rule were followed but the uncertain and diſputed views of preſent convenience and advantage: That the ſame maxims which enſured public peace, were alſo ſalutary to national liberty; the privileges of the people could only be maintained by the obſervance of laws; and if no account were made of the rights of the ſovereign, it could leſs be expected that any regard would be paid to the property and freedom of the ſubject: That it was never too late to correct any pernicious precedent; an unjuſt eſtabliſhment, the longer it ſtood, acquired the greater ſanction and validity; it could, with more appearance of reaſon, be pleaded as an authority for a like injuſtice; and the maintenance of it, inſtead of favouring public tranquillity, tended to disjoint every principle by which human ſociety was ſupported: That uſurpers would be happy, if their preſent poſſeſſion of power, or

CHAP. XXI. 1450.

their continuance for a few years, could convert them into legal princes; but nothing would be more miserable than the people, if all restraints on violence and ambition were thus removed, and a full scope given to the attempts of every turbulent innovator: That time, indeed, might bestow solidity on a government whose first foundations were the most infirm; but it required both a long course of time to produce this effect, and the total extinction of those claimants, whose title was built on the original principles of the constitution: That the deposition of Richard II. and the advancement of Henry IV. were not deliberate national acts, but the result of the levity and violence of the people, and proceeded from those very defects in human nature, which the establishment of political society, and of an order in succession, was calculated to prevent: That the subsequent entails of the crown were a continuance of the same violence and usurpation; they were not ratified by the legislature, since the consent of the rightful king was still wanting; and the acquiescence, first of the family of Mortimer, then of the family of York, proceeded from present necessity, and implied no renunciation of their pretensions: That the restoration of the true order of succession could not be considered as a change which familiarised the people to revolutions; but as the correction of a former abuse, which had itself encouraged the giddy spirit of innovations, rebellion, and disobedience: And that, as the original title of Lancaster stood only in the person of Henry IV. on present convenience, even this principle, unjustifiable as it was, when not supported by laws, and warranted by the constitution, had now entirely gone over to the other side; nor was there any comparison between a prince utterly unable to sway the sceptre, and blindly governed by corrupt ministers, or by an imperious queen, engaged in foreign and hostile interests; and a prince of

of mature years, of approved wiſdom and experience, a native of England, the lineal heir of the crown, who, by his reſtoration, would replace every thing on ancient foundations. CHAP. XXI. 1450.

So many plauſible arguments could be urged on both ſides of this intereſting queſtion, that the people were extremely divided in their ſentiments; and though the noblemen of greateſt power and influence ſeem to have eſpouſed the party of York, the oppoſite cauſe had the advantage of being ſupported by the preſent laws, and by the immediate poſſeſſion of royal authority. There were alſo many great noblemen in the Lancaſtrian party, who balanced the power of their antagoniſts, and kept the nation in ſuſpenſe between them. The earl of Northumberland adhered to the preſent government: The earl of Weſtmoreland, in ſpite of his connexions with the duke of York, and with the family of Nevil, of which he was the head, was brought over to the ſame party; and the whole north of England, the moſt warlike part of the kingdom, was, by means of theſe two potent noblemen, warmly engaged in the intereſts of Lancaſter. Edmund Beaufort, duke of Somerſet, and his brother Henry, were great ſupports of that cauſe; as were alſo Henry Holland duke of Exeter, Stafford duke of Buckingham, the earl of Shrewſbury, the lords Clifford, Dudley, Scales, Audley, and other noblemen.

While the kingdom was in this ſituation, it might naturally be expected that ſo many turbulent barons, poſſeſſed of ſo much independent authority, would immediately have flown to arms, and have decided the quarrel, after their uſual manner, by war and battle, under the ſtandards of the contending princes. But there ſtill were many cauſes which retarded theſe deſperate extremities, and made a long train of faction, intrigue, and cabal, precede the military operations. By the gradual progreſs of

CHAP. XXI. 1450.

arts in England, as well as in other parts of Europe, the people were now become of ſome importance; laws were beginning to be reſpected by them; and it was requiſite, by various pretences, previouſly to reconcile their minds to the overthrow of ſuch an ancient eſtabliſhment as that of the houſe of Lancaſter, ere their concurrence could reaſonably be expected. The duke of York himſelf, the new claimant, was of a moderate and cautious character, an enemy to violence, and diſpoſed to truſt rather to time and policy, than to ſanguinary meaſures, for the ſucceſs of his pretenſions. The very imbecility itſelf of Henry, tended to keep the factions in ſuſpenſe, and make them ſtand long in awe of each other: It rendered the Lancaſtrian party unable to ſtrike any violent blow againſt their enemies; it encouraged the Yorkiſts to hope, that, after baniſhing the king's miniſters, and getting poſſeſſion of his perſon, they might gradually undermine his authority, and be able, without the perilous expedient of a civil war, to change the ſucceſſion by parliamentary and legal authority.

1451. 6th Nov.

THE diſpoſitions which appeared in a parliament aſſembled ſoon after the arrival of the duke of York from Ireland, favoured theſe expectations of his partiſans, and both diſcovered an unuſual boldneſs in the commons, and were a proof of the general diſcontents which prevailed againſt the adminiſtration. The lower houſe, without any previous enquiry or examination, without alleging any other ground of complaint than common fame, ventured to preſent a petition againſt the duke of Somerſet, the ducheſs of Suffolk, the biſhop of Cheſter, ſir John Sutton, lord Dudley, and ſeveral others of inferior rank; and they prayed the king to remove them for ever from his perſon and councils, and to prohibit them from approaching within twelve miles of the court [5].

[5] Parliamentary Hiſtory, vol. ii. p. 263.

This

CHAP. XXI.

1451.

This was a violent attack, somewhat arbitrary, and supported but by few precedents, against the ministry; yet the king durst not openly oppose it: He replied, that, except the lords, he would banish all the others from court during a year, unless he should have occasion for their service in suppressing any rebellion. At the same time he rejected a bill which had passed both houses, for attainting the late duke of Suffolk, and which, in several of its clauses, discovered a very general prejudice against the measures of the court.

1452. The first armament of the duke of York.

THE duke of York, trusting to these symptoms, raised an army of 10,000 men, with which he marched towards London; demanding a reformation of the government, and the removal of the duke of Somerset from all power and authority [b]. He unexpectedly found the gates of the city shut against him; and, on his retreating into Kent, he was followed by the king at the head of a superior army; in which several of Richard's friends, particularly Salisbury and Warwic, appeared; probably with a view of mediating between the parties, and of seconding, on occasion, the duke of York's pretensions. A parley ensued; Richard still insisted upon the removal of Somerset, and his submitting to a trial in parliament: The court pretended to comply with his demand; and that nobleman was put in arrest: The duke of York was then persuaded to pay his respects to the king in his tent; and, on repeating his charge against the duke of Somerset, he was surprised to see that minister step from behind the curtain, and offer to maintain his innocence. Richard now found that he had been betrayed; that he was in the hands of his enemies; and that it was become necessary, for his own safety, to lower his pretensions. No violence, however, was attempted against him: The nation was not in

[b] Stowe, p. 394.

CHAP. XXI. 1452. a disposition to bear the destruction of so popular a prince: He had many friends in Henry's camp: And his son, who was not in the power of the court, might still be able to revenge his death on all his enemies: He was therefore dismissed; and he retired to his seat of Wigmore on the borders of Wales [i].

While the duke of York lived in this retreat, there happened an incident, which, by encreasing the public discontents, proved favourable to his pretensions. Several Gascon lords, affectionate to the English government, and disgusted at the new dominion of the French, came to London, and offered to return to their allegiance under Henry [k]. The earl of Shrewsbury, with a body of 8000 men, was sent over to support them. Bourdeaux opened its gates to him: He made himself master of Fronsac, Castillon, and some other places: Affairs began to wear a favourable aspect: But, as Charles hastened to resist this dangerous invasion, the fortunes of the English were soon reversed: Shrewsbury, a venerable warrior, above fourscore years of age, fell in battle; his conquests were lost; Bourdeaux was again obliged to submit to the French king [l]; and all hopes of recovering the province of Gascony were for ever extinguished.

1454. 20th July.

Though the English might deem themselves happy to be fairly rid of distant dominions which were of no use to them, and which they never could defend against the growing power of France, they expressed great discontent on the occasion; and they threw all the blame on the ministry, who had not been able to effect impossibilities. While they were in this disposition, the queen's delivery of a son, who received the name of Edward, was deemed no joyful incident; and as it removed all hopes of the

13th Oct.

[i] Grafton, p. 620.
[k] Hollingshed, p. 640.
[l] Polyd. Virg. p. 501. Grafton, p. 623.

peaceable

peaceable ſucceſſion of the duke of York, who was otherwiſe, in the right of his father, and, by the laws enacted ſince the acceſſion of the houſe of Lancaſter, next heir to the crown, it had rather a tendency to inflame the quarrel between the parties. But the duke was incapable of violent counſels; and even when no viſible obſtacle lay between him and the throne, he was prevented by his own ſcruples from mounting it. Henry, always unfit to exerciſe the government, fell at this time into a diſtemper, which ſo far encreaſed his natural imbecility, that it rendered him incapable of maintaining even the appearance of royalty. The queen and the council, deſtitute of this ſupport, found themſelves unable to reſiſt the York party; and they were obliged to yield to the torrent. They ſent Somerſet to the Tower; and appointed Richard lieutenant of the kingdom, with powers to open and hold a ſeſſion of parliament[m]. That aſſembly alſo, taking into conſideration the ſtate of the kingdom, created him protector during pleaſure. Men who thus entruſted ſovereign authority to one that had ſuch evident and ſtrong pretenſions to the crown, were not ſurely averſe to his taking immediate and full poſſeſſion of it: Yet the duke, inſtead of puſhing them to make farther conceſſions, appeared ſomewhat timid and irreſolute, even in receiving the power which was tendered to him. He deſired that it might be recorded in parliament, that this authority was conferred on him from their own free motion, without any application on his part: He expreſſed his hopes that they would aſſiſt him in the exerciſe of it: He made it a condition of his acceptance, that the other lords, who were appointed to be of his council, ſhould alſo accept of the truſt, and ſhould exerciſe it: And he required that all the powers of his office ſhould be ſpecified and defined by act of parliament.

CHAP. XXI. 1454.

[m] Rymer, vol. xi. p. 344.

CHAP. XXI. 1454.

This moderation of Richard was certainly very unusual and very amiable; yet was it attended with bad consequences in the present juncture, and, by giving time to the animosities of faction to rise and ferment, it proved the source of all those furious wars and commotions which ensued.

The enemies of the duke of York soon found it in their power to make advantage of his excessive caution. Henry, being so far recovered from his distemper as to carry the appearance of exercising the royal power; they moved him to resume his authority, to annul the protectorship of the duke, to 1455. release Somerset from the Tower[n], and to commit the administration into the hands of that nobleman. Richard, sensible of the dangers which might attend his former acceptance of the parliamentary commission, should he submit to the annulling of it, levied an army; but still without advancing any pretensions to the crown. He complained only of the king's ministers, and demanded a reformation of the government. A battle was fought at St. Alban's, in which the Yorkists were superior, and, without suffering any material loss, slew about 5000 of their enemies; among whom were the duke of Somerset, the earl of Northumberland, the earl of Stafford, eldest son of the duke of Buckingham, lord Clifford, and many other persons of distinction[o]. The king himself fell into the hands of the duke of York, who treated him with great respect and tenderness: He was only obliged (which he regarded as no hardship) to commit the whole authority of the crown into the hands of his rival.

First battle of St. Alban's, 22d May.

This was the first blood spilt in that fatal quarrel, which was not finished in less than a course of thirty years, which was signalized by twelve pitched battles, which opened a scene of extraordinary fierce-

[n] Rymer, vol. xi. p. 361. Hollingshed, p. 642. Grafton, p. 626.
[o] Stowe, p. 369. Hollingshed, p. 643.

ness

neſs and cruelty, is computed to have coſt the lives of eighty princes of the blood, and almoſt entirely annihilated the ancient nobility of England. The ſtrong attachments which, at that time, men of the ſame kindred bore to each other, and the vindictive ſpirit, which was conſidered as a point of honour, rendered the great families implacable in their reſentments, and every moment widened the breach between the parties. Yet affairs did not immediately proceed to the laſt extremities: The nation was kept ſome time in ſuſpenſe: The vigour and ſpirit of queen Margaret, ſupporting her ſmall power, ſtill proved a balance to the great authority of Richard, which was checked by his irreſolute temper. A parliament, which was ſoon after aſſembled, plainly diſcovered, by the contrariety of their proceedings, the contrariety of the motives by which they were actuated. They granted the Yorkiſts a general indemnity; and they reſtored the protectorſhip to the duke, who, in accepting it, ſtill perſevered in all his former precautions: But at the ſame time they renewed their oaths of fealty to Henry, and fixed the continuance of the protectorſhip to the majority of his ſon Edward, who was veſted with the uſual dignities of prince of Wales, duke of Cornwal, and earl of Cheſter. The only deciſive act, paſſed in this parliament, was a full reſumption of all the grants which had been made ſince the death of Henry V. and which had reduced the crown to great poverty.

CHAP. XXI. 1455. 9th July.

It was not found difficult to wreſt power from hands ſo little tenacious as thoſe of the duke of York. Margaret, availing herſelf of that prince's abſence, produced her huſband before the houſe of lords; and, as his ſtate of health permitted him at that time to act his part with ſome tolerable decency, he declared his intentions of reſuming the government, and of putting an end to Richard's authority. 1456.

CHAP. XXI. 1456. thority. This measure being unexpected, was not opposed by the contrary party: The house of lords, who were many of them disgusted with the late act of resumption, assented to Henry's proposal: And the king was declared to be reinstated in sovereign authority. Even the duke of York acquiesced in this irregular act of the peers; and no disturbance ensued. But that prince's claim to the crown was too well known, and the steps which he had taken to promote it, were too evident, ever to allow sin-
1457. cere trust and confidence to have place between the parties. The court retired to Coventry, and invited the duke of York and the earls of Salisbury and Warwic to attend the king's person. When they were on the road they received intelligence that designs were formed against their liberties and lives. They immediately separated themselves: Richard withdrew to his castle of Wigmore: Salisbury to Middleham in Yorkshire: And Warwic to his government of Calais, which had been committed to him after the battle of St. Alban's, and which, as it gave him the command of the only regular military force maintained by England, was of the utmost importance in the present juncture. Still, men of peaceable dispositions, and among the rest, Bourchier, archbishop of Canterbury, thought it not too late to interpose with their good offices, in order to prevent that effusion of blood with which the kingdom was threatened; and the awe in which each party stood of the other, rendered the mediation for some time successful. It was agreed that
1458. all the great leaders on both sides should meet in London, and be solemnly reconciled. The duke of York and his partisans came thither with numerous retinues, and took up their quarters near each other for mutual security. The leaders of the Lancastrian party used the same precaution. The mayor, at the head of 5000 men, kept a strict watch

watch night and day; and was extremely vigilant in maintaining peace between them [p]. Terms were adjusted, which removed not the ground of difference. An outward reconciliation only was procured: And in order to notify this accord to the whole people, a solemn procession to St. Paul's was appointed, where the duke of York led queen Margaret, and a leader of one party marched hand in hand with a leader of the opposite. The less real cordiality prevailed, the more were the exterior demonstrations of amity redoubled. But it was evident, that a contest for a crown could not thus be peaceably accommodated; that each party watched only for an opportunity of subverting the other; and that much blood must yet be spilt, ere the nation could be restored to perfect tranquillity, or enjoy a settled and established government. CHAP. XXI. 1458.

EVEN the smallest accident, without any formed design, was sufficient, in the present disposition of men's minds, to dissolve the seeming harmony between the parties; and had the intentions of the leaders been ever so amicable, they would have found it difficult to restrain the animosity of their followers. One of the king's retinue insulted one of the earl of Warwic's: Their companions on both sides took part in the quarrel: A fierce combat ensued: The earl apprehended his life to be aimed at: He fled to his government of Calais; and both parties, in every county of England, openly made preparations for deciding the contest by war and arms. 1459.

THE earl of Salisbury, marching to join the duke of York, was overtaken at Blore-heath, on the borders of Staffordshire, by lord Audley, who commanded much superior forces; and a small rivulet Battle of Blore-heath. 23d Sept.

[p] Fabian Chron. anno 1458. The author says, that some lords brought 900 retainers, some 600, none less than 400. See also Grafton, p. 633.

with

CHAP. XXI. 1459. with steep banks ran between the armies. Salisbury here supplied his defect in numbers by stratagem; a refinement, of which there occur few instances in the English civil wars, where a headlong courage, more than military conduct, is commonly to be remarked. He feigned a retreat, and allured Audley to follow him with precipitation: But when the van of the royal army had passed the brook, Salisbury suddenly turned upon them; and partly by the surprise, partly by the division, of the enemies' forces, put this body to rout: The example of flight was followed by the rest of the army: And Salisbury, obtaining a complete victory, reached the general rendezvous of the Yorkists at Ludlow[q].

The earl of Warwic brought over to this rendezvous a choice body of veterans from Calais, on whom it was thought the fortune of the war would much depend; but this reinforcement occasioned, in the issue, the immediate ruin of the duke of York's party. When the royal army approached, and a general action was every hour expected, sir Andrew Trollop, who commanded the veterans, deserted to the king in the night-time; and the Yorkists were so dismayed at this instance of treachery, which made every man suspicious of his fellow, that they separated next day, without striking a stroke[r]: The duke fled to Ireland: The earl of Warwic, attended by many of the other leaders, escaped to Calais; where his great popularity among all orders of men, particularly among the military, soon drew to him partisans, and rendered his power very formidable. The friends of the house of York, in England, kept themselves every where in readiness to rise on the first summons from their leaders.

1460. After meeting with some successes at sea, Warwic landed in Kent, with the earl of Salisbury, and

[q] Hollingshed, p. 649. Grafton, p. 936. [r] Hollingshed, p. 650. Grafton, p. 537.

the

the earl of Marche, eldeſt ſon of the duke of York; and being met by the primate, by lord Cobham, and other perſons of diſtinction, he marched, amidſt the acclamations of the people, to London. The city immediately opened its gates to him; and his troops encreaſing on every day's march, he ſoon found himſelf in a condition to face the royal army, which haſtened from Coventry to attack him. The battle was fought at Northampton; and was ſoon decided againſt the royaliſts by the infidelity of lord Grey of Ruthin, who, commanding Henry's van, deſerted to the enemy during the heat of action, and ſpread a conſternation through the troops. The duke of Buckingham, the earl of Shrewſbury, the lords Beaumont and Egremont, and ſir William Lucie, were killed in the action or purſuit: The ſlaughter fell chiefly on the gentry and nobility: The common people were ſpared by orders of the earls of Warwic and Marche[s]. Henry himſelf, that empty ſhadow of a king, was again taken priſoner; and as the innocence and ſimplicity of his manners, which bore the appearance of ſanctity, had procured him the tender regard of the people[t], the earl of Warwic and the other leaders took care to diſtinguiſh themſelves by their reſpectful demeanour towards him.

CHAP. XXI. 1460.

Battle of Northampton. 10th July.

A PARLIAMENT was ſummoned in the king's name, and met at Weſtminſter; where the duke ſoon after appeared from Ireland. This prince had never hitherto advanced openly any claim to the crown: He had only complained of ill miniſters, and demanded a redreſs of grievances: And even, in the preſent criſis, when the parliament was ſurrounded by his victorious army, he ſhowed ſuch a regard to law and liberty, as is unuſual during the prevalence of a party in any civil diſſenſions; and was ſtill leſs to be expected in thoſe violent and li-

A parliament. 7th Oct.

[s] Stowe, p. 409. [t] Hall, fol. 169. Grafton, p. 195.

CHAP. XXI. 1460

centious times. He advanced towards the throne; and being met by the archbiſhop of Canterbury, who aſked him, whether he had yet paid his reſpects to the king? he replied, that he knew of none to whom he owed that title. He then ſtood near the throne [u], and addreſſing himſelf to the houſe of peers, he gave them a deduction of his title by deſcent, mentioned the cruelties by which the houſe of Lancaſter had paved their way to ſovereign power, inſiſted on the calamities which had attended the government of Henry, exhorted them to return into the right path, by doing juſtice to the lineal ſucceſſor, and thus pleaded his cauſe before them as his natural and legal judges [w]. This cool and moderate manner of demanding a crown, intimidated his friends and encouraged his enemies: The lords remained in ſuſpenſe [x]; and no one ventured to utter a word on the occaſion. Richard, who had probably expected that the peers would have invited him to place himſelf on the throne, was much diſappointed at their ſilence; but deſiring them to reflect on what he had propoſed to them, he departed the houſe. The peers took the matter into conſideration with as much tranquillity as if it had been a common ſubject of debate: They deſired the aſſiſtance of ſome conſiderable members among the commons in their deliberations: They heard, in ſeveral ſucceſſive days, the reaſons alleged for the duke of York: They even ventured to propoſe objections to his claim, founded on former entails of the crown, and on the oaths of fealty ſworn to the houſe of Lancaſter [y]: They alſo obſerved, that, as Richard had all along borne the arms of York, not thoſe of Clarence, he could not claim as ſucceſſor to the latter family: And after receiving anſwers to theſe objections, derived from the violence and power by which the houſe of Lancaſter

[u] Hollingſhed, p. 655. [w] Cotton, p. 665. Grafton, p. 643.
[x] Hollingſhed, p. 657. Grafton, p. 645. [y] Cotton, p. 666.

supported their present possession of the crown, they proceeded to give a decision. Their sentence was calculated, as far as possible, to please both parties: They declared the title of the duke of York to be certain and indefeasible; but in consideration that Henry had enjoyed the crown, without dispute or controversy, during the course of thirty-eight years, they determined, that he should continue to possess the title and dignity during the remainder of his life; that the administration of the government, meanwhile, should remain with Richard; that he should be acknowledged the true and lawful heir of the monarchy; that every one should swear to maintain his succession, and it should be treason to attempt his life; and that all former settlements of the crown, in this and the two last reigns, should be abrogated and rescinded [z]. The duke acquiesced in this decision: Henry himself, being a prisoner, could not oppose it: Even if he had enjoyed his liberty, he would not probably have felt any violent reluctance against it: And the act thus passed with the unanimous consent of the whole legislative body. Though the mildness of this compromise is chiefly to be ascribed to the moderation of the duke of York, it is impossible not to observe in those transactions visible marks of a higher regard to law, and of a more fixed authority, enjoyed by parliament, than has appeared in any former period of English history. CHAP. XXI. 1460.

It is probable that the duke, without employing either menaces or violence, could have obtained from the commons a settlement more consistent and uniform: But as many, if not all the members of the upper house had received grants, concessions, or dignities, during the last sixty years, when the house of Lancaster was possessed of the government; they were afraid of invalidating their

[z] Cotton, p. 666. Grafton, p. 647.

own

CHAP. XXI. 1460.

own titles by too ſudden and violent an overthrow of that family; and in thus temporiſing between the parties, they fixed the throne on a baſis upon which it could not poſſibly ſtand. The duke, apprehending his chief danger to ariſe from the genius and ſpirit of queen Margaret, ſought a pretence for baniſhing her the kingdom: He ſent her, in the king's name, a ſummons to come immediately to London; intending, in caſe of her diſobedience, to proceed to extremities againſt her. But the queen needed not this menace to excite her activity in defending the rights of her family. After the defeat at Northampton, ſhe fled with her infant ſon to Durham, thence to Scotland; but ſoon returning, ſhe applied to the northern barons, and employed every motive to procure their aſſiſtance. Her affability, inſinuation, and addreſs, qualities in which ſhe excelled; her careſſes, her promiſes, wrought a powerful effect on every one who approached her: The admiration of her great qualities was ſucceeded by compaſſion towards her helpleſs condition: The nobility of that quarter, who regarded themſelves as the moſt warlike in the kingdom, were moved by indignation to find the ſouthern barons pretend to diſpoſe of the crown and ſettle the government: And that they might allure the people to their ſtandard, they promiſed them the ſpoils of all the provinces on the other ſide of the Trent. By theſe means, the queen had collected an army twenty thouſand ſtrong, with a celerity which was neither expected by her friends, nor apprehended by her enemies.

The duke of York, informed of her appearance in the north, haſtened thither with a body of 5000 men, to ſuppreſs, as he imagined, the beginnings of an inſurrection; when, on his arrival at Wakefield, he found himſelf ſo much outnumbered by the enemy. He threw himſelf into Sandal caſtle, which was ſituated in the neighbourhood; and he was adviſed by the earl of Saliſbury and other prudent

prudent counſellors, to remain in that fortreſs, till his ſon, the earl of Marche, who was levying forces in the borders of Wales, could advance to his aſſiſtance [a]. But the duke, though deficient in political courage, poſſeſſed perſonal bravery in an eminent degree; and notwithſtanding his wiſdom and experience, he thought that he ſhould be for ever diſgraced, if, by taking ſhelter behind walls, he ſhould for a moment reſign the victory to a woman. He deſcended into the plain, and offered battle to the enemy, which was inſtantly accepted. The great inequality of numbers was ſufficient alone to decide the victory; but the queen, by ſending a detachment, who fell on the back of the duke's army, rendered her advantage ſtill more certain and undiſputed. The duke himſelf was killed in the action; and as his body was found among the ſlain, the head was cut off by Margaret's orders, and fixed on the gates of York, with a paper crown upon it, in deriſion of his pretended title. His ſon, the earl of Rutland, a youth of ſeventeen, was brought to lord Clifford; and that barbarian, in revenge of his father's death, who had periſhed in the battle of St. Albans, murdered in cool blood, and with his own hands, this innocent prince, whoſe exterior figure, as well as other accompliſhments, are repreſented by hiſtorians as extremely amiable. The earl of Saliſbury was wounded and taken priſoner, and immediately beheaded, with ſeveral other perſons of diſtinction, by martial law at Pomfret [b]. There fell near three thouſand Yorkiſts in this battle: The duke himſelf was greatly and juſtly lamented by his own party; a prince who merited a better fate, and whoſe errors in conduct proceeded entirely from ſuch qualities, as render him the more an object of eſteem and affection. He periſhed in the fiftieth year of his age, and left three ſons, Ed-

CHAP. XXI. 1460.

Battle of Wakefield, 24th Dec.

Death of the duke of York.

[a] Stowe, p. 412. [b] Polyd. Virg. p. 510.

CHAP. XXI. ward, George, and Richard, with three daughters, Anne, Elizabeth, and Margaret.

1461. THE queen, after this important victory, divided her army. She ſent the ſmaller diviſion, under Jaſper Tudor, earl of Pembroke, half brother to the king, againſt Edward, the new duke of York. She herſelf marched with the larger diviſion towards London, where the earl of Warwic had been left with the command of the Yorkiſts. Pembroke was defeated by Edward at Mortimer's Croſs in Herefordſhire, with the loſs of near 4000 men: His army was diſperſed; he himſelf eſcaped by flight; but his father, ſir Owen Tudor, was taken priſoner, and immediately beheaded by Edward's orders. This barbarous practice, being once begun, was continued by both parties, from a ſpirit of revenge, which covered itſelf under the pretence of retaliation [c].

Battle of Mortimer's Croſs.

Second battle of St. Albans.

MARGARET compenſated this defeat by a victory which ſhe obtained over the earl of Warwic. That nobleman, on the approach of the Lancaſtrians, led out his army, reinforced by a ſtrong body of the Londoners, who were affectionate to his cauſe; and he gave battle to the queen at St. Albans. While the armies were warmly engaged, Lovelace, who commanded a conſiderable body of the Yorkiſts, withdrew from the combat; and this treacherous conduct, of which there are many inſtances in thoſe civil wars, decided the victory in favour of the queen. About 2300 of the vanquiſhed periſhed in the battle and purſuit; and the perſon of the king fell again into the hands of his own party. This weak prince was ſure to be almoſt equally a priſoner whichever faction had the keeping of him; and ſcarcely any more decorum was obſerved by one than by the other, in their method of treating him. Lord Bonville, to whoſe care he had been entruſted by the

[c] Hollingſhed, p. 660. Graſton, p. 650.

Yorkiſts,

CHAP. XXI. 1461.

Yorkiſts, remained with him after the defeat, on aſſurances of pardon given him by Henry: But Margaret, regardleſs of her huſband's promiſe, immediately ordered the head of that nobleman to be ſtruck off by the executioner [d]. Sir Thomas Kiriel, a brave warrior, who had ſignalized himſelf in the French wars, was treated in the ſame manner.

THE queen made no great advantage of this victory: Young Edward advanced upon her from the other ſide; and collecting the remains of Warwic's army, was ſoon in a condition of giving her battle with ſuperior forces. She was ſenſible of her danger while ſhe lay between the enemy and the city of London; and ſhe found it neceſſary to retreat with her army to the north [e]. Edward entered the capital amidſt the acclamations of the citizens, and immediately opened a new ſcene to his party. This prince, in the bloom of youth, remarkable for the beauty of his perſon, for his bravery, his activity, his affability, and every popular quality, found himſelf ſo much poſſeſſed of public favour, that, elated with the ſpirit natural to his age, he reſolved no longer to confine himſelf within thoſe narrow limits which his father had preſcribed to himſelf, and which had been found by experience ſo prejudicial to his cauſe. He determined to aſſume the name and dignity of king; to inſiſt openly on his claim; and thenceforth to treat the oppoſite party as traitors and rebels to his lawful authority. But as a national conſent, or the appearance of it, ſtill ſeemed, notwithſtanding his plauſible title, requiſite to precede this bold meaſure, and as the aſſembling of a parliament might occaſion too many delays, and be attended with other inconveniencies, he ventured to proceed in a leſs regular manner, and to put it out of the power of his enemies to throw obſtacles in the way of his elevation. His army was ordered to aſſemble in St. John's Fields;

[d] Hollingſhed, p. 660. [e] Grafton, p. 652.

CHAP. XXI.

1461. great numbers of people ſurrounded them; an harangue was pronounced to this mixed multitude, ſetting forth the title of Edward, and inveighing againſt the tyranny and uſurpation of the rival family; and the people were then aſked, whether they would have Henry of Lancaſter for king? They unanimouſly exclaimed againſt the propoſal. It was then demanded, whether they would accept of Edward, eldeſt ſon of the late duke of York? They expreſſed their aſſent by loud and joyful acclamations [f]. A great number of biſhops, lords, magiſtrates, and other perſons of diſtinction, were next aſſembled at Baynard's caſtle, who ratified the popular election; and the new king was on the ſubſequent day proclaimed in London, by the title of Edward IV [g].

Edward IV. aſſumes the crown.

5th March

In this manner ended the reign of Henry VI. a monarch who, while in his cradle, had been proclaimed king both of France and England, and who began his life with the moſt ſplendid proſpects that any prince in Europe had ever enjoyed. The revolution was unhappy for his people, as it was the ſource of civil wars; but was almoſt entirely indifferent to Henry himſelf, who was utterly incapable of exerciſing his authority, and who, provided he perſonally met with good uſage, was equally eaſy, as he was equally enſlaved in the hands of his enemies and of his friends. His weakneſs and his diſputed title were the chief cauſes of the public calamities: But whether his queen, and his miniſters, were not alſo guilty of ſome great abuſes of power, it is not eaſy for us at this diſtance of time to determine: There remain no proofs on record of any conſiderable violation of the laws, except in the aſſaſſination of the duke of Gloceſter, which was a private crime, formed no precedent, and was but too much of a piece with the uſual ferocity and cruelty of the times.

[f] Stowe, p. 415. Hollingſhed, p. 661. [g] Crafton, p. 653.

THE

CHAP. XXI.

1461. Miscellaneous transactions of this reign.

THE most remarkable law, which passed in this reign, was that for the due election of members of parliament in counties. After the fall of the feudal system, the distinction of tenures was in some measure lost; and every freeholder, as well those who held of mesne lords, as the immediate tenants of the crown, were by degrees admitted to give their votes at elections. This innovation (for such it may probably be esteemed) was indirectly confirmed by a law of Henry IV.[h], which gave right to such a multitude of electors as was the occasion of great disorder. In the eighth and tenth of this king, therefore, laws were enacted, limiting the electors to such as possessed forty shillings a year in land, free from all burdens, within the county[i]. This sum was equivalent to near twenty pounds a year of our present money; and it were to be wished, that the spirit, as well as letter of this law, had been maintained.

THE preamble of the statute is remarkable: "Whereas the elections of knights have of late, in "many counties of England, been made by out-"rages and excessive numbers of people, many of "them of small substance and value, yet pretending "to a right equal to the best knights and esquires; "whereby manslaughters, riots, batteries, and divi-"sions among the gentlemen and other people of "the same counties, shall very likely rise and be, "unless due remedy be provided in this behalf, &c." We may learn from these expressions, what an important matter the election of a member of parliament was now become in England: That assembly was beginning in this period to assume great authority: The commons had it much in their power to enforce the execution of the laws; and if they failed of success in this particular, it proceeded less from any exorbitant power of the crown, than from the licentious spirit of the aristocracy, and perhaps from

h Statutes at Large, 7 Henry IV. cap. 15.

i Ibid. 8 Henry VI. cap 7. 10 Henry VI. cap. 2.

CHAP. XXI. 1461.

the rude education of the age, and their own ignorance of the advantages resulting from a regular administration of justice.

When the duke of York, the earls of Salisbury and Warwic, fled the kingdom upon the desertion of their troops, a parliament was summoned at Coventry in 1460, by which they were all attainted. This parliament seems to have been very irregularly constituted, and scarcely deserves the name: Insomuch, that an act passed in it, "that all such "knights of any county, as were returned by virtue "of the king's letters, without any other election, "should be valid, and that no sheriff should, for "returning them, incur the penalty of the statute "of Henry IV[k]." All the acts of that parliament were afterwards reversed; "because it was unlaw-"fully summoned, and the knights and barons not "duly chosen[l]."

The parliaments in this reign, instead of relaxing their vigilance against the usurpations of the court of Rome, endeavoured to enforce the former statutes enacted for that purpose. The commons petitioned, that no foreigner should be capable of any church preferment, and that the patron might be allowed to present anew upon the non-residence of any incumbent[m]: But the king eluded these petitions. Pope Martin wrote him a severe letter against the statute of provisors; which he calls an abominable law, that would infallibly damn every one who observed it[n]. The cardinal of Winchester was legate; and as he was also a kind of prime minister, and immensely rich from the profits of his clerical dignities, the parliament became jealous lest he should extend the papal power; and they protested, that the cardinal should absent himself in all affairs and councils

[k] Cotton, p. 664.
[l] Statutes at Large, 39 Henry VI. cap. 1.
[m] Cotton, p. 585.
[n] Burnet's Collection of Records, vol. 1, p. 99.

of

of the king, whenever the pope or see of Rome was touched upon [o]. CHAP. XXI. 1461.

PERMISSION was given by parliament to export corn when it was at low prices; wheat at six shillings and eight pence a quarter, money of that age; barley at three shillings and four pence [p]. It appears from these prices, that corn still remained at near half its present value; though other commodities were much cheaper. The inland commerce of corn was also opened in the eighteenth of the king, by allowing any collector of the customs to grant a licence for carrying it from one county to another [q]. The same year a kind of navigation act was proposed with regard to all places within the Streights; but the king rejected it [r].

THE first instance of debt contracted upon parliamentary security occurs in this reign [s]. The commencement of this pernicious practice deserves to be noted; a practice the more likely to become pernicious, the more a nation advances in opulence and credit. The ruinous effects of it are now become but too apparent, and threaten the very existence of the nation.

[o] Cotton, p. 593. [p] Statutes at Large, 15 Henry VI. cap. 2. 23 Henry VI. cap. 6. [q] Cotton, p. 625. [r] Ibid. p. 626. [s] Ibid. p. 593. 634. 638.

CHAP. XXII.

EDWARD IV.

Battle of Touton——Henry escapes into Scotland——A parliament——Battle of Hexham——Henry taken prisoner, and confined in the Tower——King's marriage with the Lady Elizabeth Gray——Warwic disgusted——Alliance with Burgundy——Insurrection in Yorkshire——Battle of Banbury——Warwic and Clarence banished——Warwic and Clarence return——Edward IV. *expelled——Henry* VI. *restored——Edward* IV. *returns——Battle of Barnet, and death of Warwic——Battle of Teukesbury, and murder of prince Edward——Death of Henry* VI.——*Invasion of France——Peace of Pecquigni——Trial and execution of the duke of Clarence——Death and character of Edward* IV.

CHAP. XXII.

1461. YOUNG Edward, now in his twentieth year, was of a temper well fitted to make his way through such a scene of war, havoc, and devastation, as must conduct him to the full possession of that crown, which he claimed from hereditary right, but which he had assumed from the tumultuary election alone of his own party. He was bold, active, enterprising; and his hardness of heart and severity of character rendered him impregnable to all those movements of compassion, which might relax his vigour in the prosecution of the most bloody revenges upon his enemies. The very commencement of his reign gave symptoms of his sanguinary disposition.

A tradesman

Trotter fculp.t

From the Original in Kensington Palace

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A tradeſman of London, who kept ſhop at the ſign of the Crown, having ſaid that he would make his ſon heir to the Crown; this harmleſs pleaſantry was interpreted to be ſpoken in deriſion of Edward's aſſumed title; and he was condemned and executed for the offence[t]. Such an act of tyranny was a proper prelude to the events which enſued. The ſcaffold, as well as the field, inceſſantly ſtreamed with the nobleſt blood of England, ſpilt in the quarrel between the two contending families, whoſe animoſity was now become implacable. The people, divided in their affections, took different ſymbols of party: The partiſans of the houſe of Lancaſter choſe the red roſe as their mark of diſtinction; thoſe of York were denominated from the white; and theſe civil wars were thus known, over Europe, by the name of the quarrel between the two roſes.

CHAP. XXII. 1461.

The licence, in which queen Margaret had been obliged to indulge her troops, infuſed great terror and averſion into the city of London, and all the ſouthern parts of the kingdom; and as ſhe there expected an obſtinate reſiſtance, ſhe had prudently retired northwards among her own partiſans. The ſame licence, joined to the zeal of faction, ſoon brought great multitudes to her ſtandard; and ſhe was able, in a few days, to aſſemble an army, ſixty thouſand ſtrong, in Yorkſhire. The king and the earl of Warwic haſtened with an army of forty thouſand men, to check her progreſs; and when they reached Pomfret they diſpatched a body of troops, under the command of lord Fitzwalter, to ſecure the paſſage of Ferrybridge over the river Ayre, which lay between them and the enemy. Fitzwalter took poſſeſſion of the poſt aſſigned him; but was not able to maintain it againſt lord Clifford, who attacked him with ſuperior numbers. The Yorkiſts were chaſed back with great ſlaughter; and lord

[t] Habington in Kennet, p. 431. Grafton, p. 791.

Fitzwalter

CHAP. XXII. 1461.

Fitzwalter himſelf was ſlain in the action[u]. The earl of Warwic, dreading the conſequences of this diſaſter, at a time when a deciſive action was every hour expected, immediately ordered his horſe to be brought him, which he ſtabbed before the whole army; and, kiſſing the hilt of his ſword, ſwore that he was determined to ſhare the fate of the meaneſt ſoldier[w]. And, to ſhew the greater ſecurity, a proclamation was at the ſame time iſſued, giving to every one full liberty to retire; but menacing the ſevereſt puniſhment to thoſe who ſhould diſcover any ſymptoms of cowardice in the enſuing battle[x]. Lord Falconberg was ſent to recover the poſt which had been loſt: He paſſed the river ſome miles above Ferrybridge, and, falling unexpectedly on lord Clifford, revenged the former diſaſter by the defeat of the party and the death of their leader[y].

Battle of Touton, 29th of March.

THE hoſtile armies met at Touton; and a fierce and bloody battle enſued. While the Yorkiſts were advancing to the charge, there happened a great fall of ſnow, which driving full in the faces of their enemies, blinded them; and this advantage was improved by a ſtratagem of lord Falconberg's. That nobleman ordered ſome infantry to advance before the line, and, after having ſent a volley of flight arrows, as they were called, amidſt the enemy, immediately to retire. The Lancaſtrians, imagining that they were gotten within reach of the oppoſite army, diſcharged all their arrows, which thus fell ſhort of the Yorkiſts[z]. After the quivers of the enemy were emptied, Edward advanced his line, and did execution with impunity on the diſmayed Lancaſtrians: The bow, however, was ſoon laid aſide, and the ſword decided the combat, which ended in a total victory on the ſide of the Yorkiſts.

[u] W. Wyrceſter, p. 489. Hall, fol. 186. Hollingſhed, p. 664.
[w] Habington, p. 432. [x] Hollingſhed, p. 664. [y] Hiſt. Croyl. contin. p. 532. [z] Hall, fol. 186.

Edward

Edward iſſued orders to give no quarter [a]. The routed army was purſued to Tadcaſter with great bloodſhed and confuſion; and above thirty-ſix thouſand men are computed to have fallen in the battle and purſuit [b]: Among theſe were the earl of Weſtmorland, and his brother, ſir John Nevil, the earl of Northumberland, the lords Dacres and Welles, and ſir Andrew Trollop [c]. The earl of Devonſhire, who was now engaged in Henry's party, was brought a priſoner to Edward; and was, ſoon after, beheaded by martial law at York. His head was fixed on a pole erected over a gate of that city; and the head of duke Richard, and that of the earl of Saliſbury, were taken down, and buried with their bodies. Henry and Margaret had remained at York during the action; but learning the defeat of their army, and being ſenſible that no place in England could now afford them ſhelter, they fled with great precipitation into Scotland. They were accompanied by the duke of Exeter, who, though he had married Edward's ſiſter, had taken part with the Lancaſtrians, and by Henry duke of Somerſet, who had commanded in the unfortunate battle of Touton, and who was the ſon of that nobleman killed in the firſt battle of St. Albans.

CHAP. XXII. 1461.

Henry eſcapes into Scotland.

NOTWITHSTANDING the great animoſity which prevailed between the kingdoms, Scotland had never exerted itſelf with vigour, to take advantage, either of the wars which England carried on with France, or of the civil commotions which aroſe between the contending families. James I. more laudibly employed, in civilizing his ſubjects, and taming them to the ſalutary yoke of law and juſtice, avoided all hoſtilities with foreign nations; and though he ſeemed intereſted to maintain a balance between France

[a] Habington, p. 432. [b] Hollingſhed, p. 665. Grafton, p. 656. Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 533. [c] Hall, fol. 187. Habington, p. 433.

and

CHAP. XXII. 1461.

and England, he gave no farther assistance to the former kingdom in its greatest distresses, than permitting, and perhaps encouraging, his subjects to enlist in the French service. After the murder of that excellent prince, the minority of his son and successor, James II. and the distractions incident to it, retained the Scots in the same state of neutrality; and the superiority, visibly acquired by France, rendered it then unnecessary for her ally to interpose in her defence. But, when the quarrel commenced between the houses of York and Lancaster, and became absolutely incurable, but by the total extinction of one party; James, who had now risen to man's estate, was tempted to seize the opportunity, and he endeavoured to recover those places which the English had formerly conquered from his ancestors. He laid siege to the castle of Roxborough in 1460, and had provided himself with a small train of artillery for that enterprise: But his cannon were so ill framed, that one of them burst as he was firing it, and put an end to his life in the flower of his age. His son and successor, James III. was also a minor on his accession: The usual distractions ensued in the government: The queen-dowager, Anne of Gueldres, aspired to the regency: The family of Douglas opposed her pretensions: And queen Margaret, when she fled into Scotland, found there a people little less divided by faction, than those by whom she had been expelled. Though she pleaded the connexions between the royal family of Scotland and the house of Lancaster, by the young king's grandmother, a daughter of the earl of Somerset; she could engage the Scottish council to go no farther than to express their good wishes in her favour: But, on her offer to deliver to them immediately the important fortress of Berwic, and to contract her son in marriage with a sister of king James, she found a better reception; and the Scots promised the

the assistance of their arms to reinstate her family upon the throne[d]. But, as the danger from that quarter seemed not very urgent to Edward, he did not pursue the fugitive king and queen into their retreat; but returned to London, where a parliament was summoned for settling the government. CHAP. XXII. 1461.

On the meeting of this assembly, Edward found the good effects of his vigorous measure in assuming the crown, as well as of his victory at Touton, by which he had secured it: The parliament no longer hesitated between the two families, or proposed any of those ambiguous decisions, which could only serve to perpetuate and inflame the animosities of party. They recognized the title of Edward, by hereditary descent, through the family of Mortimer; and declared that he was king by right, from the death of his father, who had also the same lawful title; and that he was in possession of the crown from the day that he assumed the government, tendered to him by the acclamations of the people[e]. They expressed their abhorrence of the usurpation and intrusion of the house of Lancaster, particulary that of the earl of Derby, otherwise called Henry IV. which, they said, had been attended with every kind of disorder, the murder of the sovereign and the oppression of the subject. They annulled every grant which had passed in those reigns; they reinstated the king in all the possessions which had belonged to the crown at the petended deposition of Richard II. and though they confirmed judicial deeds, and the decrees of inferior courts, they reversed all attainders passed in any pretended parliament; particularly the attainder of the earl of Cambridge, the king's grandfather; as well as that of the earls of Salisbury and Gloucester, and of lord Lumley, who had been forfeited for adhering to Richard II[f]. 4th Nov. A parliament.

[d] Hall, fol. 137. Habington, p. 434. [e] Cotton, p. 670.
[f] Cotton, p. 672. Statutes at Large, 1 Edw. IV. cap. 1.

MANY

CHAP. XXII. 1461.

MANY of these votes were the result of the usual violence of party: The common sense of mankind, in more peaceable times, repealed them: And the statutes of the house of Lancaster, being the deeds of an established government, and enacted by princes long possessed of authority, have always been held as valid and obligatory. The parliament, however, in subverting such deep foundations, had still the pretence of replacing the government on its ancient and natural basis: But, in their subsequent measures, they were more guided by revenge, at least by the views of convenience, than by the maxims of equity and justice. They passed an act of forfeiture and attainder against Henry VI. and queen Margaret, and their infant son, prince Edward: The same act was extended to the dukes of Somerset and Exeter; to the earls of Northumberland, Devonshire, Pembroke, Wilts; to the viscount Beaumont; the lords Roos, Nevil, Clifford, Welles, Dacre, Gray of Rugemont, Hungerford; to Alexander Hedie, Nicholas Latimer, Edmond Mountfort, John Heron, and many other persons of distinction[s]. The parliament vested the estates of all these attainted persons in the crown; though their sole crime was the adhering to a prince, whom every individual of the parliament had long recognised, and whom that very king himself, who was now seated on the throne, had acknowledged and obeyed as his lawful sovereign.

THE necessity of supporting the government established will more fully justify some other acts of violence; though the method of conducting them may still appear exceptionable. John earl of Oxford, and his son Aubrey de Vere, were detected in a correspondence with Margaret, were tried by martial law before the constable, were condemned and ex-

[s] Cotton, p. 670. W. Wyrcester, p. 490.

ecuted.

ecuted [h]. Sir William Tyrrel, ſir Thomas Tudenham, and John Montgomery, were convicted in the ſame arbitrary court, were executed, and their eſtates forfeited. This introduction of martial law into civil government was a high ſtrain of prerogative; which, were it not for the violence of the times, would probably have appeared exceptionable to a nation ſo jealous of their liberties as the Engliſh were now become [i]. It was impoſſible but ſuch a great and ſudden revolution muſt leave the roots of diſcontent and diſſatisfaction in the ſubject, which would require great art, or, in lieu of it, great violence, to extirpate them. The latter was more ſuitable to the genius of the nation in that uncultivated age. CHAP. XXII. 1461.

But the new eſtabliſhment ſtill ſeemed precarious and uncertain; not only from the domeſtic diſcontents of the people, but from the efforts of foreign powers. Lewis, the eleventh of the name, had ſucceeded to his father Charles in 1460; and was led, from the obvious motives of national intereſt, to feed the flames of civil diſcord among ſuch dangerous neighbours, by giving ſupport to the weaker party. But the intriguing and politic genius of this prince was here checked by itſelf: Having attempted to ſubdue the independent ſpirit of his own vaſſals, he had excited ſuch an oppoſition at home, as prevented him from making all the advantage which the opportunity afforded, of the diſſenſions among the Engliſh. He ſent, however, a ſmall body to Henry's aſſiſtance under Varenne, ſeneſchal of Normandy [k]; who landed in Northumberland, and got poſſeſſion of the caſtle of Alnewic: But as the indefatigable Margaret went in perſon to France, where ſhe ſolicited larger ſupplies and promiſed Lewis to deliver up Calais if her family ſhould 1462.

[h] W. de Wyrceſter, p. 492. Hall, fol. 189. Grafton, p. 658. Fabian, Fol. 215. Fragm. ad finem T. Sproti.

[i] See note [H] at the end of the volume.

[k] Monſtrelet, vol. iii. p. 95.

CHAP. XXII. 1464. by his means be reſtored to the throne of England; he was induced to ſend along with her a body of 2000 men at arms, which enabled her to take the field, and to make an inroad into England. Though reinforced by a numerous train of adventurers from Scotland, and by many partiſans of the family of 25th April. Lancaſter; ſhe received a check at Hedgley-more from lord Montacute, or Montague, brother to the earl of Warwic, and warden of the eaſt marches between Scotland and England. Montague was ſo encouraged with this ſucceſs, that, while a numerous reinforcement was on their march to join him by Battle of Hexham. 15th May. orders from Edward, he yet ventured, with his own troops alone, to attack the Lancaſtrians at Hexham; and he obtained a complete victory over them. The duke of Somerſet, the lords Roos and Hungerford, were taken in the purſuit, and immediately beheaded by martial law at Hexham. Summary juſtice was in like manner executed at Newcaſtle on ſir Humphrey Nevil and ſeveral other gentlemen. All thoſe who were ſpared in the field ſuffered on the ſcaffold; and the utter extermination of their adverſaries was now become the plain object of the York party; a conduct which received but too plauſible an apology from the preceding practice of the Lancaſtrians.

THE fate of the unfortunate royal family, after this defeat, was ſingular. Margaret, flying with her ſon into a foreſt, where ſhe endeavoured to conceal herſelf, was beſet, during the darkneſs of the night, by robbers, who, either ignorant or regardleſs of her quality, deſpoiled her of her rings and jewels, and treated her with the utmoſt indignity. The partition of this rich booty raiſed a quarrel among them; and while their attention was thus engaged, ſhe took the opportunity of making her eſcape with her ſon, into the thickeſt of the foreſt, where ſhe wandered for ſome time, overſpent with hunger and fatigue, and ſunk with terror and affliction. While in this

wretched condition, she saw a robber approach with his naked sword; and finding that she had no means of escape, she suddenly embraced the resolution of trusting entirely for protection to his faith and generosity. She advanced towards him; and presenting to him the young prince, called out to him, *Here, my friend, I commit to your care the safety of your king's son.* The man, whose humanity and generous spirit had been obscured, not entirely lost, by his vicious course of life, was struck with the singularity of the event, was charmed with the confidence reposed in him; and vowed, not only to abstain from all injury against the princess, but to devote himself entirely to her service [l]. By his means she dwelt some time concealed in the forest, and was at last conducted to the sea-coast, whence she made her escape into Flanders. She passed thence into her father's court, where she lived several years in privacy and retirement. Her husband was not so fortunate or so dexterous in finding the means of escape. Some of his friends took him under their protection, and conveyed him into Lancashire; where he remained concealed during a twelvemonth; but he was at last detected, delivered up to Edward, and thrown into the Tower [m]. The safety of his person was owing less to the generosity of his enemies, than to the contempt which they had entertained of his courage and his understanding.

CHAP. XXII. 1464.

The imprisonment of Henry, the expulsion of Margaret, the execution and confiscation of all the most eminent Lancastrians, seemed to give full security to Edward's government; whose title by blood being now recognised by parliament, and universally submitted to by the people, was no longer in danger of being impeached by any antagonist. In this prosperous situation, the king deli-

[l] Monstrelet, vol. iii. p. 96.
[m] Hall, fol. 191. Fragm. ad finem Sprotti.

CHAP. XXII. 1464.

vered himself up, without control, to those pleasures which his youth, his high fortune, and his natural temper invited him to enjoy; and the cares of royalty were less attended to, than the dissipation of amusement or the allurements of passion. The cruel and unrelenting spirit of Edward, though enured to the ferocity of civil wars, was at the same time extremely devoted to the softer passions, which, without mitigating his severe temper, maintained a great influence over him, and shared his attachment with the pursuits of ambition and the thirst of military glory. During the present interval of peace, he lived in the most familiar and sociable manner with his subjects[n], particularly with the Londoners; and the beauty of his person, as well as the gallantry of his address, which, even unassisted by his royal dignity, would have rendered him acceptable to the fair, facilitated all his applications for their favour. This easy and pleasurable course of life augmented every day his popularity among all ranks of men: He was the peculiar favourite of the young and gay of both sexes. The disposition of the English, little addicted to jealousy, kept them from taking umbrage at these liberties: And his indulgence in amusements, while it gratified his inclination, was thus become, without design, a means of supporting and securing his government. But as it is difficult to confine the ruling passion within strict rules of prudence, the amorous temper of Edward led him into a snare, which proved fatal to his repose, and to the stability of his throne.

King's marriage with the lady Elizabeth Grey.

JAQUELINE of Luxembourg, dutchess of Bedford, had, after her husband's death, so far sacrificed her ambition to love, that she espoused, in second marriage, sir Richard Woodeville, a private gentleman, to whom she bore several children; and among the rest, Elizabeth, who was remarkable for

[n] Polyd. Virg. p. 513. Biondi.

the

CHAP. XXII. 1464.

the grace and beauty of her perſon, as well as for other amiable accompliſhments. This young lady had married ſir John Gray of Groby, by whom ſhe had children; and her huſband being ſlain in the ſecond battle of St. Alban's, fighting on the ſide of Lancaſter, and his eſtate being for that reaſon confiſcated, his widow retired to live with her father, at his ſeat of Grafton in Northamptonſhire. The king came accidentally to the houſe after a hunting party, in order to pay a viſit to the dutcheſs of Bedford; and as the occaſion ſeemed favourable for obtaining ſome grace from this gallant monarch, the young widow flung herſelf at his feet, and with many tears entreated him to take pity on her impoveriſhed and diſtreſſed children. The ſight of ſo much beauty in affliction ſtrongly affected the amorous Edward; love ſtole inſenſibly into his heart under the guiſe of compaſſion; and her ſorrow, ſo becoming a virtuous matron, made his eſteem and regard quickly correſpond to his affection. He raiſed her from the ground with aſſurances of favour; he found his paſſion increaſe every moment by the converſation of the amiable object; and he was ſoon reduced, in his turn, to the poſture and ſtyle of a ſupplicant at the feet of Elizabeth. But the lady, either averſe to diſhonourable love from a ſenſe of duty, or perceiving that the impreſſion which ſhe had made, was ſo deep as to give her hopes of obtaining the higheſt elevation, obſtinately refuſed to gratify his paſſion; and all the endearments, careſſes, and importunities of the young and amiable Edward, proved fruitleſs againſt her rigid and inflexible virtue. His paſſion, irritated by oppoſition, and increaſed by his veneration for ſuch honourable ſentiments, carried him at laſt beyond all bounds of reaſon; and he offered to ſhare his throne, as well as his heart, with the woman, whoſe beauty of perſon and dignity of character ſeemed ſo well to entitle her to both. The marriage

CHAP. XXII. 1464.

was privately celebrated at Grafton[o]. The secret was carefully kept for some time: No one suspected, that so libertine a prince could sacrifice so much to a romantic passion: And there were in particular strong reasons, which at that time rendered this step to the highest degree dangerous and imprudent.

The king, desirous to secure his throne, as well by the prospect of issue, as by foreign alliances, had, a little before, determined to make application to some neighbouring princess; and he had cast his eye on Bona of Savoy, sister of the queen of France, who, he hoped, would, by her marriage, ensure him the friendship of that power, which was alone both able and inclined to give support and assistance to his rival. To render the negociation more successful, the earl of Warwic had been dispatched to Paris, where the princess then resided; he had demanded Bona in marriage for the king; his proposals had been accepted; the treaty was fully concluded; and nothing remained but the ratification of the terms agreed on, and the bringing over the princess to England[p]. But when the secret of Edward's marriage broke out, the haughty earl, deeming himself affronted, both by being employed in this fruitless negociation, and by being kept a stranger to the king's intentions, who had owed every thing to his friendship, immediately returned to England, inflamed with rage and indignation. The influence of passion over so young a man as Edward might have served as an excuse for his imprudent conduct, had he deigned to acknowledge his error, or had pleaded his weakness as an apology: But his faulty shame or pride prevented him from so much as mentioning the matter to Warwic; and that nobleman was allowed to depart the court, full of the same ill-humour and discontent which he brought to it.

Warwic disgusted.

[o] Hall, fol. 193. Fabian, fol. 216. Habington, p. 437. Hollingshed, p. 667. Grafton, p. 665. Polyd. Virg. p. 513.

[p] Hall, fol. 193.

Every

CHAP. XXII. 1466.

EVERY incident now tended to widen the breach between the king and this powerful ſubject. The queen, who loſt not her influence by marriage, was equally ſolicitous to draw every grace and favour to her own friends and kindred, and to exclude thoſe of the earl, whom ſhe regarded as her mortal enemy. Her father was created earl of Rivers: He was made treaſurer in the room of lord Mountjoy [q]: He was inveſted in the office of conſtable for life; and his ſon received the ſurvivance of that high dignity [r]. The ſame young nobleman was married to the only daughter of lord Scales, enjoyed the great eſtate of that family, and had the title of Scales conferred upon him. Catharine, the queen's ſiſter, was married to the young duke of Buckingham, who was a ward of the crown [s]: Mary, another of her ſiſters, eſpouſed William Herbert, created earl of Huntingdon: Ann, a third ſiſter, was given in marriage to the ſon and heir of Gray lord Ruthyn, created earl of Kent [t]. The daughter and heir of the duke of Exeter, who was alſo the king's niece, was contracted to ſir Thomas Gray, one of the queen's ſons by her former huſband; and as lord Montague was treating of a marriage between his ſon and this lady, the preference given to young Gray was deemed an injury and affront to the whole family of Nevil.

THE earl of Warwic could not ſuffer with patience the leaſt diminution of that credit which he had long enjoyed, and which he thought he had merited by ſuch important ſervices. Though he had received ſo many grants from the crown, that the revenue ariſing from them amounted, beſides his patrimonial eſtate, to 80,000 crowns a-year, according to the computation of Philip de Comines [u]; his ambitious ſpirit was ſtill diſſatisfied, ſo

[q] W. Wyrceſter, p. 506.
[r] Rymer, vol. xi. p. 581.
[s] W. Wyrceſter, p. 505.
[t] Ibid. p. 506.
[u] Liv. iii. chap. 4.

CHAP. XXII. 1460.

long as he saw others surpass him in authority and influence with the king [w]. Edward also, jealous of that power which had supported him, and which he himself had contributed still higher to exalt, was well pleased to raise up rivals in credit to the earl of Warwic; and he justified, by this political view, his extreme partiality to the queen's kindred. But the nobility of England, envying the sudden growth of the Woodevilles [x], were more inclined to take part with Warwic's discontent, to whose grandeur they were already accustomed, and who had reconciled them to his superiority by his gracious and popular manners. And as Edward obtained from parliament a general resumption of all grants which he had made since his accession, and which had extremely impoverished the crown [y]; this act, though it passed with some exceptions, particularly one in favour of the earl of Warwic, gave a general alarm to the nobility, and disgusted many, even zealous partisans of the family of York.

But the most considerable associate that Warwic acquired to his party, was George duke of Clarence, the king's second brother. This prince deemed himself no less injured than the other grandees, by the uncontrolled influence of the queen and her relations; and as his fortunes were still left on a precarious footing, while theirs were fully established, this neglect, joined to his unquiet and restless spirit, inclined him to give countenance to all the malcontents [z]. The favourable opportunity of gaining him was espied by the earl of Warwic, who offered him in marriage his elder daughter, and co-heir of his immense fortunes; a settlement which, as it was superior to any that the king himself could confer upon him, immediately attached him to the party of the earl [a]. Thus an extensive

[w] Polyd. Virg. p. 514. [x] Hist. Croyl. cont. p. 559.
[y] W. Wyrcester, p. 508. [z] Grafton, p. 673.
[a] W. Wyrcester, p. 511. Hall, fol. 200. Habington, p. 439. Hollingshed, p. 671. Polyd. Virg. p. 515.

and dangerous combination was insensibly formed against Edward and his ministry. Though the immediate object of the malcontents was not to overturn the throne, it was difficult to foresee the extremities to which they might be carried: And as opposition to government was usually in those ages prosecuted by force of arms, civil convulsions and disorders were likely to be soon the result of these intrigues and confederacies. CHAP. XXII. 1466.

Alliance with the duke of Burgundy.

WHILE this cloud was gathering at home, Edward carried his views abroad, and endeavoured to secure himself against his factious nobility by entering into foreign alliances. The dark and dangerous ambition of Lewis XI. the more it was known, the greater alarm it excited among his neighbours and vassals; and as it was supported by great abilities, and unrestrained by any principle of faith or humanity, they found no security to themselves but by a jealous combination against him. Philip duke of Burgundy was now dead: His rich and extensive dominions were devolved to Charles his only son, whose martial disposition acquired him the surname of *Bold*, and whose ambition, more outrageous than that of Lewis, but seconded by less power and policy, was regarded with a more favourable eye by the other potentates of Europe. The opposition of interests, and still more, a natural antipathy of character, produced a declared animosity between these bad princes; and Edward was thus secure of the sincere attachment of either of them, for whom he should chuse to declare himself. The duke of Burgundy being descended by his mother, a daughter of Portugal, from John of Gaunt, was naturally inclined to favour the house of Lancaster[b]: But this consideration was easily overbalanced by political motives; and Charles, perceiving the interests of that house to be extremely

[b] Comines, liv. iii. chap. 4. 6.

CHAP. XXII.

decayed in England, sent over his natural brother, commonly called the Bastard of Burgundy, to carry in his name proposals of marriage to Margaret the king's sister. The alliance of Burgundy was more popular among the English than that of France; the commercial interests of the two nations invited the princes to a close union; their common jealousy of Lewis was a natural cement between them; and Edward, pleased with strengthening himself by so potent a confederate, soon concluded the alliance, and bestowed his sister upon Charles [c]. A league which Edward at the same time concluded with the duke of Britanny, seemed both to encrease his security, and to open to him the prospect of rivalling his predecessors in those foreign conquests, which, however short-lived and unprofitable, had rendered their reigns so popular and illustrious [d].

1466.

1468.

1469.

But whatever ambitious schemes the king might have built on these alliances, they were soon frustrated by intestine commotions, which engrossed all his attention. These disorders probably arose not immediately from the intrigues of the earl of Warwic, but from accident, aided by the turbulent spirit of the age, by the general humour of discontent which that popular nobleman had instilled into the nation, and perhaps by some remains of attachment to the house of Lancaster. The hospital of St. Leonard's near York had received, from an antient grant of king Athelstane, a right of levying a thrave of corn upon every plough-land in the county; and as these charitable establishments are liable to abuse, the country people complained that the revenue of the hospital was no longer expended for the relief of the poor, but was secreted by the managers, and employed to their private purposes. After long repining at the contribution, they refused payment: Ecclesiastical and civil censures were

Insurrection in Yorkshire.

[c] Hall, fol. 169. 197.

[d] W. Wyrcester, p. 5. Parliament. Hist. vol. ii. p. 332.

issued

iſſued againſt them: Their goods were diſtrained, and their perſons thrown into jail: Till, as their ill-humour daily increaſed, they roſe in arms; fell upon the officers of the hoſpital, whom they put to the ſword; and proceeded in a body, fifteen thouſand ſtrong, to the gates of York. Lord Montague, who commanded in thoſe parts, oppoſed himſelf to their progreſs; and having been ſo fortunate in a ſkirmiſh as to ſeize Robert Hulderne their leader, he ordered him immediately to be led to execution; according to the practice of the times. The rebels, however, ſtill continued in arms; and being ſoon headed by men of greater diſtinction, ſir Henry Nevil ſon of lord Latimer, and ſir John Coniers, they advanced ſouthwards, and began to appear formidable to government. Herbert earl of Pembroke, who had received that title on the forfeiture of Jaſper Tudor, was ordered by Edward to march againſt them at the head of a body of Welchmen; and he was joined by five thouſand archers under the command of Stafford earl of Devonſhire, who had ſucceeded in that title to the family of Courtney, which had alſo been attainted. But a trivial difference about quarters having begotten an animoſity between theſe two noblemen, the earl of Devonſhire retired with his archers, and left Pembroke alone to encounter the rebels. The two armies approached each other near Banbury; and Pembroke, having prevailed in a ſkirmiſh, and having taken ſir Henry Nevil priſoner, ordered him immediately to be put to death, without any form of proceſs. This execution enraged without terrifying the rebels: They attacked the Welch army, routed them, put them to the ſword without mercy; and having ſeized Pembroke, they took immediate revenge upon him for the death of their leader. The king, imputing this misfortune to the earl of Devonſhire, who had deſerted Pembroke, ordered him to be executed in a like ſummary manner. But theſe ſpeedy executions,

CHAP. XXII. 1469.

Battle of Banbury.

26th July.

CHAP. XXII. 1469.

tions, or rather open murders, did not ſtop there: The northern rebels, ſending a party to Grafton, ſeized the earl of Rivers and his ſon John; men who had become obnoxious by their near relation to the king, and his partiality towards them: And they were immediately executed by orders from ſir John Coniers [e].

THERE is no part of Engliſh hiſtory ſince the Conqueſt ſo obſcure, ſo uncertain, ſo little authentic, or conſiſtent, as that of the wars between the two Roſes: Hiſtorians differ about many material circumſtances; ſome events of the utmoſt conſequence, in which they almoſt all agree, are incredible and contradicted by records [f]; and it is remarkable, that this profound darkneſs falls upon us juſt on the eve of the reſtoration of letters, and when the art of printing was already known in Europe. All we can diſtinguiſh with certainty through the deep cloud which covers that period, is a ſcene of horror and bloodſhed, ſavage manners, arbitrary executions, and treacherous, diſhonourable conduct in all parties. There is no poſſibility, for inſtance, of accounting for the views and intentions of the earl of Warwic at this time. It is agreed that he reſided, together with his ſon-in-law the duke of Clarence, in his government of Calais, during the commencement of this rebellion; and that his brother Montague acted with vigour againſt the northern rebels. We may thence preſume, that the inſurrection had not proceeded from the ſecret counſels and inſtigation of Warwic; though the murder committed by the rebels on the earl of Rivers, his capital enemy, forms, on the other hand, a violent preſumption againſt him. He and Clarence came over to England, offered their ſervice to Edward, were received without any ſuſpicion, were entruſted by him in the higheſt commands [g], and ſtill perſevered in their

[e] Fabian, fol. 217. [f] See note [I] at the end of the volume.
[g] Kymer, vol. xi. p. 647, 649, 650.

fidelity.

fidelity. Soon after, we find the rebels quieted and dispersed by a general pardon granted by Edward from the advice of the earl of Warwic: But why so courageous a prince, if secure of Warwic's fidelity, should have granted a general pardon to men who had been guilty of such violent and personal outrages against him, is not intelligible; nor why that nobleman, if unfaithful, should have endeavoured to appease a rebellion, of which he was able to make such advantages. But it appears that, after this insurrection, there was an interval of peace, during which the king loaded the family of Nevil with honours and favours of the highest nature: He made lord Montague a marquis by the same name: He created his son George duke of Bedford[h]: He publicly declared his intention of marrying that young nobleman to his eldest daughter Elizabeth, who, as he had yet no sons, was presumptive heir of the crown: Yet we find that soon after, being invited to a feast by the archbishop of York, a younger brother of Warwic and Montague, he entertained a sudden suspicion that they intended to seize his person or to murder him: And he abruptly left the entertainment[i]. CHAP. XXII. 1469.

Soon after, there broke out another rebellion, which is as unaccountable as all the preceding events; chiefly because no sufficient reason is assigned for it, and because, so far as it appears, the family of Nevil had no hand in exciting and fomenting it. It arose in Lincolnshire, and was headed by sir Robert Welles, son to the lord of that name. The army of the rebels amounted to 30,000 men; but lord Welles himself, far from giving countenance to them, fled into a sanctuary, in order to secure his person against the king's anger or suspicions. He was allured from this retreat by a promise of safety; 1470.

h Cotton, p. 702. i Fragm. Ed. IV. ad fin. Sprotti.

and

CHAP. XXII. 1470. 13th Mar.

and was soon after, notwithstanding this assurance, beheaded along with sir Thomas Dymoc, by orders from Edward [k]. The king fought a battle with the rebels, defeated them, took sir Robert Welles and sir Thomas Launde prisoners, and ordered them immediately to be beheaded.

Edward, during these transactions, had entertained so little jealousy of the earl of Warwic or duke of Clarence, that he sent them with commissions of array to levy forces against the rebels [l]: But these malcontents, as soon as they left the court, raised troops in their own name, issued declarations against the government, and complained of grievances, oppressions, and bad ministers. The unexpected defeat of Welles disconcerted all their measures; and they retired northwards into Lancashire, where they expected to be joined by lord Stanley, who had married the earl of Warwic's sister. But as that nobleman refused all concurrence with them, and as lord Montague also remained quiet in Yorkshire; they were obliged to disband their army, and to fly into Devonshire, where they embarked and made sail towards Calais [m].

Warwic and Clarence banished.

The deputy-governor, whom Warwic had left at Calais, was one Vaucler, a Gascon, who seeing the earl return in this miserable condition, refused him admittance; and would not so much as permit the duchess of Clarence to land; though a few days before she had been delivered on ship-board of a son, and was at that time extremely disordered by sickness. With difficulty he would allow a few flaggons of wine to be carried to the ship for the

[k] Hall, fol. 204. Fabian, fol. 218. Habington, p. 442. Hollingshed, p. 674. [l] Rymer, vol. xi. p. 652.

[m] The king offered by proclamation a reward of 1000 pounds, or 100 pounds a year in land, to any that would seize them. Whence we may learn that land was at that time sold for about ten years purchase. See Rymer, vol. xi. p. 654.

use

uſe of the ladies: But as he was a man of ſagacity, and well acquainted with the revolutions to which England was ſubject, he ſecretly apologiſed to Warwic for this appearance of infidelity, and repreſented it as proceeding entirely from zeal for his ſervice. He ſaid, that the fortreſs was ill ſupplied with proviſions; that he could not depend on the attachment of the garriſon; that the inhabitants, who lived by the Engliſh commerce, would certainly declare for the eſtabliſhed government; that the place was at preſent unable to reſiſt the power of England on the one hand, and that of the duke of Burgundy on the other; and that, by ſeeming to declare for Edward, he would acquire the confidence of that prince, and ſtill keep it in his power, when it ſhould become ſafe and prudent, to reſtore Calais to its ancient maſter[n]. It is uncertain whether Warwic was ſatisfied with this apology, or ſuſpected a double infidelity in Vaucler; but he feigned to be entirely convinced by him; and having ſeized ſome Flemiſh veſſels which he found lying off Calais, he immediately made ſail towards France. CHAP. XXII. 1470.

THE king of France, uneaſy at the cloſe conjunction between Edward and the duke of Burgundy, received with the greateſt demonſtrations of regard the unfortunate Warwic[o], with whom he had formerly maintained a ſecret correſpondence, and whom he hoped ſtill to make his inſtrument in overturning the government of England, and re-eſtabliſhing the houſe of Lancaſter. No animoſity was ever greater than that which had long prevailed between that houſe and the earl of Warwic. His father had been executed by orders from Margaret: He himſelf had twice reduced Henry to captivity, had baniſhed the queen, had put to death all their

[n] Comines, liv. iii. chap. 4. Hall, fol. 205.
[o] Polyd. Virg. p. 519.

moſt

CHAP. XXII. 1470.

moſt zealous partiſans either in the field or on the ſcaffold, and had occaſioned innumerable ills to that unhappy family. For this reaſon, believing that ſuch inveterate rancour could never admit of any cordial reconciliation, he had not mentioned Henry's name, when he took arms againſt Edward; and he rather endeavoured to prevail by means of his own adherents, than revive a party which he ſincerely hated. But his preſent diſtreſſes and the entreaties of Lewis made him hearken to terms of accommodation; and Margaret being ſent for from Angers, where ſhe then reſided, an agreement was from common intereſt ſoon concluded between them. It was ſtipulated, that Warwic ſhould eſpouſe the cauſe of Henry, and endeavour to reſtore him to liberty, and to re-eſtabliſh him on the throne; that the adminiſtration of the government, during the minority of young Edward, Henry's ſon, ſhould be entruſted conjointly to the earl of Warwic and the duke of Clarence; that prince Edward ſhould marry the lady Anne, ſecond daughter of that nobleman; and that the crown, in caſe of the failure of male iſſue in that prince, ſhould deſcend to the duke of Clarence, to the entire excluſion of king Edward and his poſterity. Never was confederacy, on all ſides, leſs natural, or more evidently the work of neceſſity: But Warwic hoped, that all former paſſions of the Lancaſtrians might be loſt in preſent political views; and that at worſt, the independent power of his family, and the affections of the people, would ſuffice to give him ſecurity, and enable him to exact the full performance of all the conditions agreed on. The marriage of prince Edward with the lady Anne was immediately celebrated in France.

EDWARD foreſaw that it would be eaſy to diſſolve an alliance compoſed of ſuch diſcordant parts. For this purpoſe he ſent over a lady of great ſagacity and addreſs,

addreſs, who belonged to the train of the ducheſs of Clarence, and who, under colour of attending her miſtreſs, was empowered to negotiate with the duke, and to renew the connexions of that prince with his own family [p]. She repreſented to Clarence, that he had unwarily, to his own ruin, become the inſtrument of Warwic's vengeance, and had thrown himſelf intirely in the power of his moſt inveterate enemies; that the mortal injuries which the one royal family had ſuffered from the other, were now paſt all forgiveneſs, and no imaginary union of intereſts could ever ſuffice to obliterate them; that even if the leaders were willing to forget paſt offences, the animoſity of their adherents would prevent a ſincere coalition of parties, and would, in ſpite of all temporary and verbal agreements, preſerve an eternal oppoſition of meaſures between them; and that a prince who deſerted his own kindred, and joined the murderers of his father, left himſelf ſingle, without friends, without protection, and would not, when misfortunes inevitably fell upon him, be ſo much as entitled to any pity or regard from the reſt of mankind. Clarence was only one and twenty years of age, and ſeems to have poſſeſſed but a ſlender capacity; yet could he eaſily ſee the force of theſe reaſons; and upon the promiſe of forgiveneſs from his brother, he ſecretly engaged, on a favourable opportunity, to deſert the earl of Warwic, and abandon the Lancaſtrian party.

CHAP. XXII. 1470.

DURING this negociation, Warwic was ſecretly carrying on a correſpondence of the ſame nature with his brother the marquis of Montague, who was entirely truſted by Edward; and like motives produced a like reſolution in that nobleman. The marquis alſo, that he might render the projected blow the more deadly and incurable, reſolved, on

[p] Comines, liv. iii. chap. 5. Hall, fol. 207. Hollingſhed, p. 675.

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CHAP. XXII. 1470.

his side, to watch a favourable opportunity for committing *his* perfidy, and still to maintain the appearance of being a zealous adherent to the house of York.

After these mutual snares were thus carefully laid, the decision of the quarrel advanced apace. Lewis prepared a fleet to escort the earl of Warwic, and granted him a supply of men and money [q]. The duke of Burgundy, on the other hand, enraged at that nobleman for his seizure of the Flemish vessels before Calais, and anxious to support the reigning family in England, with whom his own interests were now connected, fitted out a larger fleet, with which he guarded the Channel; and he incessantly warned his brother-in-law of the imminent perils to which he was exposed. But Edward, though always brave and often active, had little foresight or penetration. He was not sensible of his danger: He made no suitable preparations against the earl of Warwic [r]: He even said, that the duke might spare himself the trouble of guarding the seas, and that he wished for nothing more than to see Warwic set foot on English ground [s]. A vain confidence in his own prowess, joined to the immoderate love of pleasure, had made him incapable of all sound reason and reflection.

September. Warwic and Clarence return.

The event soon happened, of which Edward seemed so desirous. A storm dispersed the Flemish navy, and left the sea open to Warwic [t]. That nobleman seized the opportunity, and setting sail, quickly landed at Dartmouth, with the duke of Clarence, the earls of Oxford and Pembroke, and a small body of troops; while the king was in the north, engaged in suppressing an insurrection which had been raised by lord Fitz-Hugh, brother-in-law

[q] Comines, liv. iii. chap. 4. Hall, fol. 207. [r] Grafton, p. 687. [s] Comines, liv. iii. chap. 5. Hall, fol. 208.
[t] Comines, liv. iii. chap. 5.

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to Warwic. The ſcene which enſues reſembles more the fiction of a poem or romance than an event in true hiſtory. The prodigious popularity of Warwic[u], the zeal of the Lancaſtrian party, the ſpirit of diſcontent with which many were infected, and the general inſtability of the Engliſh nation, occaſioned by the late frequent revolutions, drew ſuch multitudes to his ſtandard, that in a very few days his army amounted to ſixty thouſand men, and was continually increaſing. Edward haſtened ſouthwards to encounter him; and the two armies approached each other near Nottingham, where a deciſive action was every hour expected. The rapidity of Warwic's progreſs had incapacitated the duke of Clarence from executing *his* plan of treachery; and the marquis of Montague had here the opportunity of ſtriking the firſt blow. He communicated the deſign to his adherents, who promiſed him their concurrence: They took to arms in the night-time, and haſtened with loud acclamations to Edward's quarters: The king was alarmed at the noiſe, and ſtarting from bed, heard the cry of war uſually employed by the Lancaſtrian party. Lord Haſtings, his chamberlain, informed him of the danger, and urged him to make his eſcape by ſpeedy flight from an army where he had ſo many concealed enemies, and where few ſeemed zealouſly attached to his ſervice. He had juſt time to get on horſeback, and to hurry with a ſmall retinue to Lynne in Norfolk, where he luckily found ſome ſhips ready, on board of which he inſtantly embarked[w]. And after this manner the earl of Warwic, in no longer ſpace than eleven days after his firſt landing, was left entire maſter of the kingdom.

CHAP. XXII. 1470.

Edw. IV. expelled.

But Edward's danger did not end with his embarkation. The Eaſterlings or Hanſe-Towns were

[u] Hall, fol. 205.

[w] Comines, liv. iii. chap. 5. Hall, fol. 208.

CHAP. XXII. 1470.

then at war both with France and England; and some ships of these people, hovering on the English coast, espied the king's vessels, and gave chase to them; nor was it without extreme difficulty that he made his escape into the port of Alcmaer in Holland. He had fled from England with such precipitation, that he had carried nothing of value along with him; and the only reward which he could bestow on the captain of the vessel that brought him over, was a robe lined with sables; promising him an ample recompence if fortune should ever become more propitious to him[x].

It is not likely that Edward could be very fond of presenting himself in this lamentable plight before the duke of Burgundy; and that having so suddenly, after his mighty vaunts, lost all footing in his own kingdom, he could be insensible to the ridicule which must attend him in the eyes of that prince. The duke on his part was no less embarrassed how he should receive the dethroned monarch. As he had ever borne a greater affection to the house of Lancaster than to that of York, nothing but political views had engaged him to contract an alliance with the latter; and he foresaw, that probably the revolution in England would now turn this alliance against him, and render the reigning family his implacable and jealous enemy. For this reason, when the first rumour of that event reached him, attended with the circumstance of Edward's death, he seemed rather pleased with the catastrophe; and it was no agreeable disappointment to find, that he must either undergo the burthen of supporting an exiled prince, or the dishonour of abandoning so near a relation. He began already to say that his connexions were with the kingdom of England, not with the king; and it was indifferent to him whether the name of Edward, or that of

[x] Comines, liv. iii. chap. 5.

Henry,

Henry, were employed in the articles of treaty. These sentiments were continually strengthened by the subsequent events. Vaucler, the deputy governor of Calais, though he had been confirmed in his command by Edward, and had even received a pension from the duke of Burgundy on account of his fidelity to the crown, no sooner saw his old master Warwic reinstated in authority, than he declared for him, and with great demonstrations of zeal and attachment put the whole garrison in his livery. And the intelligence which the duke received every day from England, seemed to promise an entire and full settlement in the family of Lancaster. CHAP. XXII. 1470.

Henry VI. restored.

IMMEDIATELY after Edward's flight had left the kingdom at Warwic's disposal, that nobleman hastened to London; and taking Henry from his confinement in the Tower, into which he himself had been the chief cause of throwing him, he proclaimed him king with great solemnity. A parliament was summoned, in the name of that prince, to meet at Westminster; and as this assembly could pretend to no liberty, while surrounded by such enraged and insolent victors, governed by such an impetuous spirit as Warwic, their votes were entirely dictated by the ruling faction. The treaty with Margaret was here fully executed: Henry was recognised as lawful king; but his incapacity for government being avowed, the regency was entrusted to Warwic and Clarence till the majority of prince Edward; and in default of that prince's issue, Clarence was declared successor to the crown. The usual business also of reversals went on without opposition: Every statute made during the reign of Edward was repealed; that prince was declared to be an usurper; he and his adherents were attainted; and in particular Richard duke of Gloucester, his younger brother: All the attainders of the Lancastrians, the dukes of Somerset and Exeter, the earls of Rich-

CHAP. XXII. 1470.

mond, Pembroke, Oxford, and Ormond, were reverſed; and every one was reſtored who had loſt either honours or fortune by his former adherence to the cauſe of Henry.

THE ruling party were more ſparing in their executions than was uſual after any revolutions during thoſe violent times. The only victim of diſtinction was John Tibetot, earl of Worceſter. This accompliſhed perſon, born in an age and nation where the nobility valued themſelves on ignorance as their privilege, and left learning to monks and ſchoolmaſters, for whom indeed the ſpurious erudition that prevailed was beſt fitted, had been ſtruck with the firſt rays of true ſcience, which began to penetrate from the ſouth, and had been zealous, by his exhortation and example, to propagate the love of letters among his unpoliſhed countrymen. It is pretended, that knowledge had not produced on this nobleman himſelf the effect which ſo naturally attends it, of humanizing the temper and ſoftening the heart[y]; and that he had enraged the Lancaſtrians againſt him, by the ſeverities which he exerciſed upon them during the prevalence of his own party. He endeavoured to conceal himſelf after the flight of Edward; but was caught on the top of a tree in the foreſt of Weybridge, was conducted to London, tried before the earl of Oxford, condemned, and executed. All the other conſiderable Yorkiſts either fled beyond ſea, or took ſhelter in ſanctuaries; where the eccleſiaſtical privileges afforded them protection. In London alone, it is computed that no leſs than 2000 perſons ſaved themſelves in this manner[z]; and among the reſt, Edward's queen, who was there delivered of a ſon, called by his father's name[a].

QUEEN Margaret, the other rival queen, had not yet appeared in England; but on receiving intelli-

[y] Hall, fol. 210. Stowe, p. 422. [z] Comines, liv. iii. chap. 7.
[a] Hall, fol. 210. Stowe, p. 423. Hollingſhed, p. 677. Grafton, p. 696.

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gence of Warwic's ſucceſs, was preparing with prince Edward for her journey. All the baniſhed Lancaſtrians flocked to her; and among the reſt, the duke of Somerſet, ſon of the duke beheaded after the battle of Hexham. This nobleman, who had long been regarded as the head of the party, had fled into the Low Countries on the diſcomfiture of his friends; and as he concealed his name and quality, he had there languiſhed in extreme indigence. Philip de Comines tells us [b], that he himſelf ſaw him, as well as the duke of Exeter, in a condition no better than that of a common beggar; till being diſcovered by Philip duke of Burgundy, they had ſmall penſions allotted them, and were living in ſilence and obſcurity, when the ſucceſs of their party called them from their retreat. But both Somerſet and Margaret were detained by contrary winds from reaching England [c], till a new revolution in that kingdom, no leſs ſudden and ſurpriſing than the former, threw them into greater miſery than that from which they had juſt emerged. CHAP. XXII. 1470.

THOUGH the duke of Burgundy, by neglecting Edward, and paying court to the eſtabliſhed government, had endeavoured to conciliate the friendſhip of the Lancaſtrians, he found that he had not ſucceeded to his wiſh; and the connexions between the king of France and the earl of Warwic ſtill held him in great anxiety [d]. This nobleman, too haſtily regarding Charles as a determined enemy, had ſent over to Calais a body of 4000 men, who made inroads into the Low Countries [e]; and the duke of Burgundy ſaw himſelf in danger of being overwhelmed by the united arms of England and of France. He reſolved therefore to grant ſome aſſiſtance to his brother-in-law; but in ſuch a covert manner as ſhould give the leaſt offence poſſible to

[b] Liv. iii. chap. 4.
[c] Grafton, p. 692. Polyd. Virg. p. 522.
[d] Hall, fol. 205.
[e] Comines, liv. iii. chap. 6.

CHAP. XXII. 1471.

the Engliſh government. He equipped four large veſſels, in the name of ſome private merchants, at Terveer in Zealand; and cauſing fourteen ſhips to be ſecretly hired from the Eaſterlings, he delivered this ſmall ſquadron to Edward, who, receiving alſo a ſum of money from the duke, immediately ſet ſail for England. No ſooner was Charles informed of his departure, than he iſſued a proclamation inhibiting all his ſubjects from giving him countenance or aſſiſtance[f]; an artifice which could not deceive the earl of Warwic, but which might ſerve as a decent pretence, if that nobleman were ſo diſpoſed, for maintaining friendſhip with the duke of Burgundy.

March 25. Edw. IV. returns.

EDWARD, impatient to take revenge on his enemies, and to recover his loſt authority, made an attempt to land with his forces, which exceeded not 2000 men, on the coaſt of Norfolk; but being there repulſed, he ſailed northwards, and diſembarked at Ravenſpur in Yorkſhire. Finding that the new magiſtrates, who had been appointed by the earl of Warwic, kept the people every where from joining him, he pretended, and even made oath, that he came not to challenge the crown, but only the inheritance of the houſe of York, which of right belonged to him; and that he did not intend to diſturb the peace of the kingdom. His partiſans every moment flocked to his ſtandard: He was admitted into the city of York: And he was ſoon in ſuch a ſituation as gave him hopes of ſucceeding in all his claims and pretenſions. The marquis of Montague commanded in the northern counties; but from ſome myſterious reaſons which, as well as many other important tranſactions in that age, no hiſtorian has cleared up, he totally neglected the beginnings of an inſurrection which he ought to have eſteemed ſo formidable. Warwic aſſembled

[f] Comines, liv. iii. chap. 6.

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an army at Leiceſter, with an intention of meeting and of giving battle to the enemy; but Edward, by taking another road, paſſed him unmoleſted, and preſented himſelf before the gates of London. Had he here been refuſed admittance, he was totally undone: But there were many reaſons which inclined the citizens to favour him. His numerous friends, iſſuing from their ſanctuaries, were active in his cauſe; many rich merchants, who had formerly lent him money, ſaw no other chance for their payment but his reſtoration; the city-dames, who had been liberal of their favours to him, and who ſtill retained an affection for this young and gallant prince, ſwayed their huſbands and friends in his favour [g]; and above all the archbiſhop of York, Warwic's brother, to whom the care of the city was committed, had ſecretly, from unknown reaſons, entered into a correſpondence with him; and he facilitated Edward's admiſſion into London. The moſt likely cauſe which can be aſſigned for thoſe multiplied infidelities, even in the family of Nevil itſelf, is the ſpirit of faction, which, when it becomes inveterate, it is very difficult for any man entirely to ſhake off. The perſons who had long diſtinguiſhed themſelves in the York party, were unable to act with zeal and cordiality for the ſupport of the Lancaſtrians; and they were inclined, by any proſpect of favour or accommodation offered them by Edward, to return to their ancient connexions. However this may be, Edward's entrance into London made him maſter not only of that rich and powerful city, but alſo of the perſon of Henry, who, deſtined to be the perpetual ſport of fortune, thus fell again into the hands of his enemies [h].

CHAP. XXII. 1471.

April 11.

It appears not that Warwic, during his ſhort adminiſtration, which had continued only ſix months,

[g] Comines, liv. iii. chap. 7. [h] Grafton, p. 702.

CHAP. XXII. 1471.

had been guilty of any unpopular act, or had anywise deserved to lose that general favour with which he had so lately overwhelmed Edward. But this prince, who was formerly on the defensive, was now the aggressor; and having overcome the difficulties which always attend the beginnings of an insurrection, possessed many advantages above his enemy: His partisans were actuated by that zeal and courage which the notion of an attack inspires; his opponents were intimidated for a like reason; every one who had been disappointed in the hopes which he had entertained from Warwic's elevation, either became a cool friend or an open enemy to that nobleman; and each malcontent, from whatever cause, proved an accession to Edward's army. The king, therefore, found himself in a condition to face the earl of Warwic; who, being reinforced by his son-in-law the duke of Clarence, and his brother the marquis of Montague, took post at Barnet, in the neighbourhood of London. The arrival of queen Margaret was every day expected, who would have drawn together all the genuine Lancastrians, and have brought a great accession to Warwic's forces: But this very consideration proved a motive to the earl rather to hurry on a decisive action, than to share the victory with rivals and ancient enemies, who he foresaw would, in case of success, claim the chief merit in the enterprise[i]. But while his jealousy was all directed towards that side, he overlooked the dangerous infidelity of friends, who lay the nearest to his bosom. His brother Montague, who had lately temporised, seems now to have remained sincerely attached to the interests of his family: But his son-in-law, though bound to him by every tie of honour and gratitude, though he shared the power of the regency, though he had been invested by Warwic in all the honours and pa-

[i] Comines, liv. iii. chap. 7.

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CHAP. XXII. 1471.

trimony of the houſe of York, reſolved to fulfil the ſecret engagements which he had formerly taken with his brother, and to ſupport the intereſts of his own family: He deſerted to the king in the night-time, and carried over a body of 12,000 men along with him [k]. Warwic was now too far advanced to retreat; and as he rejected with diſdain all terms of peace offered by Edward and Clarence, he was obliged to hazard a general engagement. The battle was fought with obſtinacy on both ſides: The two armies, in imitation of their leaders, diſplayed uncommon valour: And the victory remained long undecided between them. But an accident threw the balance to the ſide of the Yorkiſts. Edward's cogniſance was a ſun; that of Warwic a ſtar with rays; and the miſtineſs of the morning rendering it difficult to diſtinguiſh them, the earl of Oxford, who fought on the ſide of the Lancaſtrians, was by miſtake attacked by his friends, and chaſed off the field of battle [l]. Warwic, contrary to his more uſual practice, engaged that day on foot, reſolving to ſhow his army that he meant to ſhare every fortune with them; and he was ſlain in the thickeſt of the engagement [m]: His brother underwent the ſame fate: And as Edward had iſſued orders not to give any quarter, a great and undiſtinguiſhed ſlaughter was made in the purſuit [n]. There fell about 1500 on the ſide of the victors.

April 14. Battle of Barnet, and death of Warwic.

The ſame day on which this deciſive battle was fought [o], queen Margaret and her ſon, now about eighteen years of age, and a young prince of great hopes, landed at Weymouth, ſupported by a ſmall body of French forces. When this princeſs received intelligence of her huſband's captivity, and of the defeat and death of the earl of Warwic, her courage, which had ſupported her under ſo many diſaſ-

[k] Grafton, p. 700. Comines, liv. iii. chap. 7. Leland's Collect. vol. ii. p. 505. [l] Habington, p. 449. [m] Comines, liv. iii. chap. 7. [n] Hall, fol. 218. [o] Leland's Collect. vol. ii. p. 505.

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CHAP. XXII.

1471.

trous events, here quite left her; and she immediately foresaw all the dismal consequences of this calamity. At first she took sanctuary in the abbey of Beaulieu [p]; but being encouraged by the appearance of Tudor earl of Pembroke, and Courtney earl of Devonshire, of the lords Wenloc and St. John, with other men of rank, who exhorted her still to hope for success, she resumed her former spirit, and determined to defend to the utmost the ruins of her fallen fortunes. She advanced through the counties of Devon, Somerset, and Gloucester, increasing her army on each day's march; but was at last overtaken by the rapid and expeditious Edward at Teukesbury, on the banks of the Severne.

Battle of Teukesbury. 4th May.

The Lancastrians were here totally defeated: The earl of Devonshire and lord Wenloc were killed in the field: The duke of Somerset, and about twenty other persons of distinction, having taken shelter in a church, were surrounded, dragged out, and immediately beheaded: About 3000 of their side fell in battle: And the army was entirely dispersed.

Queen Margaret and her son were taken prisoners, and brought to the king, who asked the prince, after an insulting manner, how he dared to invade his dominions? The young prince, more mindful of his high birth than of his present fortune, replied, that he came thither to claim his just inheritance. The ungenerous Edward, insensible to pity, struck him on the face with his gauntlet;

Murder of prince Edward. 21st May.

and the dukes of Clarence and Gloucester, lord Hastings, and sir Thomas Gray, taking the blow as a signal for farther violence, hurried the prince into the next apartment, and there dispatched him with their daggers [q]. Margaret was thrown into the Tower: King Henry expired in that confinement a few days after the battle of Teukesbury; but whe-

[p] Hall, fol. 219. Habington, p. 451. Grafton, p. 706. Polyd. Virg. p. 528.

[q] Hall, fol. 221. Habington, p. 453. Hollingshed, p. 688. Polyd. Virg. p. 530.

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ther he died a natural or violent death is uncertain. It is pretended, and was generally believed, that the duke of Gloceſter killed him with his own hands [r]: But the univerſal odium which that prince has incurred, inclined perhaps the nation to aggravate his crimes without any ſufficient authority. It is certain, however, that Henry's death was ſudden; and though he laboured under an ill ſtate of health, this circumſtance, joined to the general manners of this age, gave a natural ground of ſuſpicion; which was rather increaſed than diminiſhed by the expoſing of his body to public view. That precaution ſerved only to recal many ſimilar inſtances in the Engliſh hiſtory, and to ſuggeſt the compariſon. CHAP. XXII. 1471. Death of Henry VI.

ALL the hopes of the houſe of Lancaſter ſeemed now to be utterly extinguiſhed. Every legitimate prince of the family was dead: Almoſt every great leader of the party had periſhed in battle or on the ſcaffold: The earl of Pembroke, who was levying forces in Wales, diſbanded his army when he received intelligence of the battle of Teukeſbury; and he fled into Britanny with his nephew, the young earl of Richmond [s]. The baſtard of Falconberg, who had levied ſome forces, and had advanced to London during Edward's abſence, was repulſed; his men deſerted him; he was taken priſoner, and immediately executed [t]: And peace being now fully reſtored to the nation, a parliament was ſummoned, 6th Oct. which ratified, as uſual, all the acts of the victor, and recogniſed his legal authority.

BUT this prince, who had been ſo firm, and active, and intrepid, during the courſe of adverſity, was ſtill unable to reſiſt the allurements of a proſperous fortune; and he wholly devoted himſelf,

[r] Comines. Hall, fol. 223. Grafton, p. 703. [s] Habington, p. 454. Polyd. Virg. p. 531. [t] Hollingſhed, p. 689, 690. 693. Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 554.

as

CHAP. XXII. 1471. as before, to pleasure and amusement, after he became entirely master of his kingdom, and had no longer any enemy who could give him anxiety or alarm. He recovered, however, by this gay and inoffensive course of life, and by his easy familiar manners, that popularity which it is natural to imagine he had lost by the repeated cruelties exercised upon his enemies; and the example also of his jovial festivity served to abate the former acrimony of faction among his subjects, and to restore the social disposition which had been so long interrupted between the opposite parties. All men seemed to be fully satisfied with the present government; and the memory of past calamities served only to impress the people more strongly with a sense of their allegiance, and with the resolution of never incurring any more the hazard of renewing such direful scenes.

1474. But while the king was thus indulging himself in pleasure, he was roused from his lethargy by a prospect of foreign conquests, which it is probable his desire of popularity, more than the spirit of ambition, had made him covet. Though he deemed himself little beholden to the duke of Burgundy for the reception which that prince had given him during his exile [u], the political interests of their states maintained still a close connexion between them; and they agreed to unite their arms in making a powerful invasion on France. A league was formed, in which Edward stipulated to pass the seas with an army exceeding 10,000 men, and to invade the French territories: Charles promised to join him with all his forces: The king was to challenge the crown of France, and to obtain at least the provinces of Normandy and Guienne: The duke was to acquire Champaigne and some other territories, and

[u] Comines, liv. iii. chap. 7.

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CHAP. XXII.

to free all his dominions from the burthen of homage to the crown of France: And neither party was to make peace without the consent of the other[w]. They were the more encouraged to hope for success from this league, as the count of St. Pol, constable of France, who was master of St. Quintin, and other towns on the Somme, had secretly promised to join them; and there were also hopes of engaging the duke of Britanny to enter into the confederacy. 1474.

The prospect of a French war was always a sure means of making the parliament open their purses, as far as the habits of that age would permit. They voted the king a tenth of rents, or two shillings in the pound; which must have been very inaccurately levied, since it produced only 31,460 pounds; and they added to this supply a whole fifteenth, and three quarters of another[x]; But as the king deemed these sums still unequal to the undertaking, he attempted to levy money by way of *benevolence*; a kind of exaction which, except during the reigns of Henry III. and Richard II. had not been much practised in former times, and which, though the consent of the parties was pretended to be gained, could not be deemed entirely voluntary[y]. The clauses annexed to the parliamentary grant show sufficiently the spirit of the nation in this respect. The money levied by the fifteenth was not to be put into the king's hands, but to be kept in religious houses; and if the expedition into France should not take place, it was immediately to be refunded to the people. After these grants the parliament was dissolved, which had sitten near two years and a half, and had undergone several prorogations; a practice not very usual at that time in England.

[w] Rymer, vol. xi. p. 806, 807, 808, &c. [x] Cotton, p. 696. 700. Hist. Croyl. cont. p. 558. [y] Hall, fol. 226. Habington, p. 461. Grafton, p. 719. Fabian, fol. 221.

The

CHAP. XXII.

1475. Invasion of France.

THE king passed over to Calais with an army of 1500 men at arms, and 15,000 archers; attended by all the chief nobility of England, who, prognosticating future successes from the past, were eager to appear on this great theatre of honour [z]. But all their sanguine hopes were damped when they found, on entering the French territories, that neither did the constable open his gates to them, nor the duke of Burgundy bring them the smallest assistance. That prince, transported by his ardent temper, had carried all his armies to a great distance, and had employed them in wars on the frontiers of Germany, and against the duke of Lorrain: And though he came in person to Edward, and endeavoured to apologise for this breach of treaty, there was no prospect that they would be able this campaign to make a conjunction with the English. This circumstance gave great disgust to the king, and inclined him to hearken to those advances which Lewis continually made him for an accommodation.

THAT monarch, more swayed by political views than by the point of honour, deemed no submissions too mean, which might free him from enemies who had proved so formidable to his predecessors, and who, united to so many other enemies, might still shake the well-established government of France. It appears from Comines, that discipline was at this time very imperfect among the English; and that their civil wars, though long continued, yet being always decided by hasty battles, had still left them ignorant of the improvements which the military art was beginning to receive upon the continent [a]: But as Lewis was sensible that the warlike genius of the

[z] Comines, liv iv. chap. 5. This author says (chap. 11.) that the king artfully brought over some of the richest of his subjects, who he knew would be soon tired of the war, and would promote all proposals of peace, which he foresaw would be soon necessary.

[a] Comines, liv. iv. chap. 5.

people would soon render them excellent soldiers, he was far from despising them for their present want of experience; and he employed all his art to detach them from the alliance of Burgundy. When Edward sent him a herald to claim the crown of France, and to carry him a defiance in case of refusal, so far from answering to this bravado in like haughty terms, he replied with great temper, and even made the herald a considerable present [b]: He took afterwards an opportunity of sending a herald to the English camp; and having given him directions to apply to the lords Stanley and Howard, who he heard were friends to peace, he desired the good offices of these noblemen in promoting an accommodation with their master [c]. As Edward was now fallen into like dispositions, a truce was soon concluded on terms more advantageous than honourable to Lewis. He stipulated to pay Edward immediately 75,000 crowns, on condition that he should withdraw his army from France, and promised to pay him 50,000 crowns a year during their joint lives: It was added, that the dauphin when of age should marry Edward's eldest daughter [d]. In order to ratify this treaty, the two monarchs agreed to have a personal interview; and for that purpose suitable preparations were made at Pecquigni, near Amiens. A close rail was drawn across a bridge in that place, with no larger intervals than would allow the arm to pass; a precaution against a similar accident to that which befel the duke of Burgundy in his conference with the dauphin at Montereau. Edward and Lewis came to the opposite sides; conferred privately together; and having confirmed their friendship, and interchanged many mutual civilities, they soon after parted [e].

CHAP. XXII. 1475.

29th Aug.

Peace of Pecquigni.

[b] Comines, liv. iv. chap. 5. Hall, fol. 227. [c] Comines, liv. iv. chap. 7. [d] Rymer, vol. xii. p. 17. [e] Comines, liv. iv. chap. 9.

CHAP. XXII. 1475.

LEWIS was anxious not only to gain the king's friendſhip, but alſo that of the nation, and of all the conſiderable perſons in the Engliſh court. He beſtowed penſions, to the amount of 16,000 crowns a year, on ſeveral of the king's favourites; on lord Haſtings two thouſand crowns; on lord Howard and others in proportion; and theſe great miniſters were not aſhamed thus to receive wages from a foreign prince. As the two armies, after the concluſion of the truce, remained ſome time in the neighbourhood of each other, the Engliſh were not only admitted freely into Amiens, where Lewis reſided, but had alſo their charges defrayed, and had wine and victuals furniſhed them in every inn, without any payments being demanded. They flocked thither in ſuch multitudes, that once above nine thouſand of them were in the town, and they might have made themſelves maſters of the king's perſon; but Lewis concluding, from their jovial and diſſolute manner of living, that they had no bad intentions, was careful not to betray the leaſt ſign of fear or jealouſy. And when Edward, informed of this diſorder, deſired him to ſhut the gates againſt him, he replied, that he would never agree to exclude the Engliſh from the place where he reſided; but that Edward, if he pleaſed, might recal them, and place his own officers at the gates of Amiens to prevent their returning[f].

LEWIS's deſire of confirming a mutual amity with England engaged him even to make imprudent advances, which it coſt him afterwards ſome pains to evade. In the conference at Pecquigni, he had ſaid to Edward, that he wiſhed to have a viſit from him at Paris; that he would there endeavour to amuſe him with the ladies; and that, in caſe any offences were then committed, he would aſſign him the cardinal of Bourbon for confeſſor, who from fellow-feeling would not be over and above ſevere in the penances

[f] Hall, fol. 235. [g] Comines, liv. iv. chap. 9. Hall, fol. 233.

which he would enjoin. This hint made deeper impreſſion than Lewis intended. Lord Howard, who accompanied him back to Amiens, told him, in confidence, that, if he were ſo diſpoſed, it would not be impoſſible to perſuade Edward to take a journey with him to Paris, where they might make merry together. Lewis pretended at firſt not to hear the offer; but, on Howard's repeating it, he expreſſed his concern that his wars with the duke of Burgundy would not permit him to attend his royal gueſt, and do him the honours he intended. "Edward," ſaid he, privately to Comines, "is "a very handſome and a very amorous prince: "Some lady at Paris may like him as well as he "ſhall do her; and may invite him to return in "another manner. It is better that the ſea be be-"tween us[h]."

CHAP. XXII. 1475.

THIS treaty did very little honour to either of theſe monarchs: It diſcovered the imprudence of Edward, who had taken his meaſures ſo ill with his allies, as to be obliged, after ſuch an expenſive armament, to return without making any acquiſitions adequate to it: It ſhowed the want of dignity in Lewis, who, rather than run the hazard of a battle, agreed to ſubject his kingdom to a tribute, and thus acknowledge the ſuperiority of a neighbouring prince, poſſeſſed of leſs power and territory than himſelf. But, as Lewis made intereſt the ſole teſt of honour, he thought that all the advantages of the treaty were on his ſide, and that he had overreached Edward, by ſending him out of France on ſuch eaſy terms. For this reaſon he was very ſolicitous to conceal his triumph; and he ſtrictly enjoined his courtiers never to ſhow the Engliſh the leaſt ſign of mockery or deriſion. But he did not himſelf very carefully obſerve ſo prudent a rule: He could not forbear, one day, in the joy of his

[h] Comines, liv. iv. chap. 10. Habington, p. 469.

CHAP. XXII. 1475.

heart, throwing out ſome raillery on the eaſy ſimplicity of Edward and his council; when he perceived that he was overheard by a Gaſcon who had ſettled in England. He was immediately ſenſible of his indiſcretion; ſent a meſſage to the gentleman; and offered him ſuch advantages in his own country, as engaged him to remain in France. *It is but juſt*, ſaid he, *that I pay the penalty of my talkativeneſs*[i].

THE moſt honourable part of Lewis's treaty with Edward was the ſtipulation for the liberty of queen Margaret, who, though after the death of her huſband and ſon, ſhe could no longer be formidable to government, was ſtill detained in cuſtody by Edward. Lewis paid fifty thouſand crowns for her ranſom; and that princeſs, who had been ſo active on the ſtage of the world, and who had experienced ſuch a variety of fortune, paſſed the remainder of her days in tranquillity and privacy, till the year 1482, when ſhe died: An admirable princeſs, but more illuſtrious by her undaunted ſpirit in adverſity, than by her moderation in proſperity. She ſeems neither to have enjoyed the virtues, nor been ſubject to the weakneſſes, of her ſex; and was as much tainted with the ferocity as endowed with the courage of that barbarous age in which ſhe lived.

THOUGH Edward had ſo little reaſon to be ſatisfied with the conduct of the duke of Burgundy, he reſerved to that prince a power of acceding to the treaty of Pecquigni: But Charles, when the offer was made him, haughtily replied, that he was able to ſupport himſelf without the aſſiſtance of England, and that he would make no peace with Lewis till three months after Edward's return into his own country. This prince poſſeſſed all the ambition and courage of a conqueror; but being defective in policy and prudence, qualities no leſs eſſential, he was

[i] Comines, liv. iii. chap. 10.

unfortunate

unfortunate in all his enterprises, and perished at last in battle against the Swiss [k]; a people whom he despised, and who, though brave and free, had hitherto been in a manner overlooked in the general system of Europe. This event, which happened in the year 1477, produced a great alteration in the views of all the princes, and was attended with consequences which were felt for many generations. Charles left only one daughter, Mary, by his first wife; and this princess being heir of his opulent and extensive dominions, was courted by all the potentates of Christendom, who contended for the possession of so rich a prize. Lewis, the head of her family, might, by a proper application, have obtained this match for the dauphin, and have thereby united to the crown of France all the provinces of the Low Countries, together with Burgundy, Artois, and Picardy; which would at once have rendered his kingdom an overmatch for all its neighbours. But a man wholly interested is as rare as one entirely endowed with the opposite quality; and Lewis, though impregnable to all the sentiments of generosity and friendship, was, on this occasion, carried from the road of true policy by the passions of animosity and revenge. He had imbibed so deep a hatred to the house of Burgundy, that he rather chose to subdue the princess by arms, than unite her to his family by marriage: He conquered the duchy of Burgundy and that part of Picardy, which had been ceded to Philip the Good by the treaty of Arras: But he thereby forced the states of the Netherlands to bestow their sovereign in marriage on Maximilian of Austria, son of the emperor Frederic, from whom they looked for protection in their present distresses: And by these means France lost the opportunity, which she never could recal, of making that important acquisition of power and territory.

CHAP. XXII. 1477.

[k] Comines, liv. v. chap. 8.

CHAP. XXII. 1477.

During this interesting crisis, Edward was no less defective in policy, and was no less actuated by private passions, unworthy of a sovereign and a statesman. Jealousy of his brother Clarence had caused him to neglect the advances which were made of marrying that prince, now a widower, to the heiress of Burgundy[l]; and he sent her proposals of espousing Anthony earl of Rivers, brother to his queen, who still retained an entire ascendant over him. But the match was rejected with disdain[m]; and Edward, resenting this treatment of his brother-in-law, permitted France to proceed without interruption in her conquests over his defenceless ally. Any pretence sufficed him for abandoning himself entirely to indolence and pleasure, which were now become his ruling passions. The only object which divided his attention, was the improving of the public revenue, which had been dilapidated by the necessities or negligence of his predecessors; and some of his expedients for that purpose, though unknown to us, were deemed, during the time, oppressive to the people[n]. The detail of private wrongs naturally escapes the notice of history; but an act of tyranny, of which Edward was guilty in his own family, has been taken notice of by all writers, and has met with general and deserved censure.

Trial and execution of the duke of Clarence.

The duke of Clarence, by all his services in deserting Warwic, had never been able to regain the king's friendship, which he had forfeited by his former confederacy with that nobleman. He was still regarded at court as a man of a dangerous and a fickle character; and the imprudent openness and violence of his temper, though it rendered him much less dangerous, tended extremely to multiply his enemies, and to incense them against him.

[l] Polyd. Virg. Hall, fol. 240. Hollingshed, p. 703. Habington, p. 474. Grafton, p. 742. [m] Hall, fol. 240.
[n] Ibid. 241. Hist. Croyl. cont. p. 559.

CHAP. XXII. 1477.

Among others, he had had the misfortune to give diſpleaſure to the queen herſelf, as well as to his brother the duke of Gloceſter, a prince of the deepeſt policy, of the moſt unrelenting ambition, and the leaſt ſcrupulous in the means which he employed for the attainment of his ends. A combination between theſe potent adverſaries being ſecretly formed againſt Clarence, it was determined to begin by attacking his friends; in hopes, that if he patiently endured this injury, his puſillanimity would diſhonour him in the eyes of the public; if he made reſiſtance, and expreſſed reſentment, his paſſion would betray him into meaſures which might give them advantages againſt him. The king, hunting one day in the park of Thomas Burdet of Arrow, in Warwickſhire, had killed a white buck, which was a great favourite of the owner; and Burdet, vexed at the loſs, broke into a paſſion, and wiſhed the horns of the deer in the belly of the perſon who had adviſed the king to commit that inſult upon him. This natural expreſſion of reſentment, which would have been overlooked or forgotten had it fallen from any other perſon, was rendered criminal and capital in that gentleman, by the friendſhip in which he had the misfortune to live with the duke of Clarence: He was tried for his life; the judges and jury were found ſervile enough to condemn him; and he was publicly beheaded at Tyburn for this pretended offence[o]. About the ſame time, one John Stacey an eccleſiaſtic, much connected with the duke, as well as with Burdet, was expoſed to a like iniquitous and barbarous proſecution. This clergyman, being more learned in mathematics and aſtronomy than was uſual in that age, lay under the imputation of necromancy with the ignorant vulgar; and the court laid hold of this popular rumour to effect his deſtruction. He was brought to his trial

[o] Habington, p. 475. Hollingſhed, p. 703. Sir Thomas More in Kennet, p. 498.

CHAP. XXII.

for that imaginary crime; many of the greateſt peers countenanced the proſecution by their preſence; he was condemned, put to the torture, and executed [p].

1477.

THE duke of Clarence was alarmed when he found theſe acts of tyranny exerciſed on all around him: He reflected on the fate of the good duke of Gloceſter in the laſt reign, who, after ſeeing the moſt infamous pretences employed for the deſtruction of his neareſt connexions, at laſt fell himſelf a victim to the vengeance of his enemies. But Clarence, inſtead of ſecuring his own life againſt the preſent danger by ſilence and reſerve, was open and loud in juſtifying the innocence of his friends, and in exclaiming againſt the iniquity of their proſecutors. The king, highly offended with his freedom, or uſing that pretence againſt him, committed him to the Tower [q], ſummoned a parliament, and tried him for his life before the houſe of peers, the ſupreme tribunal of the nation.

1478. 16th Jan.

THE duke was accuſed of arraigning public juſtice, by maintaining the innocence of men who had been condemned in courts of judicature; and of inveighing againſt the iniquity of the king, who had given orders for their proſecution [r]. Many raſh expreſſions were imputed to him, and ſome too reflecting on Edward's legitimacy; but he was not accuſed of any overt act of treaſon; and even the truth of theſe ſpeeches may be doubted of, ſince the liberty of judgment was taken from the court, by the king's appearing perſonally as his brother's accuſer [s], and pleading the cauſe againſt him. But a ſentence of condemnation, even when this extraordinary circumſtance had not place, was a neceſſary conſequence in thoſe times, of any proſecution by the court or the prevailing party; and the duke of Clarence was pronounced guilty by the peers. The houſe of commons were no leſs ſlaviſh and unjuſt:

[p] Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 561. [q] Ibid. p. 562.
[r] Stowe, p. 430. [s] Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 562.

They

They both petitioned for the execution of the duke, and afterwards paſſed a bill of attainder againſt him [t]. The meaſures of the parliament, during that age, furniſh us with examples of a ſtrange contraſt of freedom and ſervility: They ſcruple to grant, and ſometimes refuſe, to the king the ſmalleſt ſupplies, the moſt neceſſary for the ſupport of government, even the moſt neceſſary for the maintenance of wars, for which the nation, as well as the parliament itſelf, expreſſed great fondneſs: But they never ſcruple to concur in the moſt flagrant act of injuſtice or tyranny, which falls on any individual, however diſtinguiſhed by birth or merit. Theſe maxims, ſo ungenerous, ſo oppoſite to all principles of good government, ſo contrary to the practice of preſent parliaments, are very remarkable in all the tranſactions of the Engliſh hiſtory, for more than a century after the period in which we are now engaged. CHAP. XXII. 1478.

THE only favour which the king granted his brother, after his condemnation, was to leave him the choice of his death; and he was privately drowned in a butt of malmeſey in the Tower: A whimſical choice, which implies that he had an extraordinary paſſion for that liquor. The duke left two children by the elder daughter of the earl of Warwic; a ſon, created an earl by his grandfather's title, and a daughter, afterwards counteſs of Saliſbury. Both this prince and princeſs were alſo unfortunate in their end, and died a violent death; a fate which for many years attended almoſt all the deſcendants of the royal blood in England. There prevails a report, that a chief ſource of the violent proſecution of the duke of Clarence, whoſe name was George, was a current prophecy, that the king's ſon ſhould be murdered by one, the initial letter of whoſe name was G [u]. It is not impoſſible but, in thoſe ignorant 18th Feb.

[t] Stowe, p. 430. Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 562.

[u] Hall, fol. 239. Hollingſhed, p. 703. Grafton, p. 741. Polyd. Virg. p. 537. Sir Thomas More in Kennet, p. 497.

CHAP. XXII.

times, such a silly reason might have some influence: But it is more probable that the whole story
1478. is the invention of a subsequent period, and founded on the murder of these children by the duke of Gloucester. Comines remarks, that, at that time, the English never were without some superstitious prophecy or other, by which they accounted for every event.

All the glories of Edward's reign terminated with the civil wars; where his laurels too were extremely sullied with blood, violence, and cruelty. His spirit seems afterwards to have been sunk in indolence and pleasure, or his measures were frustrated by imprudence and the want of foresight. There was no object on which he was more intent than to have all his daughters settled by splendid marriages, though most of these princesses were yet in their infancy, and though the completion of his views, it was obvious, must depend on numberless accidents, which were impossible to be foreseen or prevented. His eldest daughter, Elizabeth, was contracted to the dauphin; his second, Cicely, to the eldest son of James III. king of Scotland; his third, Anne, to Philip only son of Maximilian and the duchess of Burgundy; his fourth, Catharine, to John son and heir to Ferdinand king of Arragon, and Isabella queen of Castile[w]. None of these projected marriages took place; and the king himself saw, in his life-time, the rupture of the first, that with the dauphin, for which he had always discovered a peculiar fondness. Lewis, who paid no regard to treaties or engagements, found his advantage in contracting the dauphin to the princess Margaret daughter of Maximilian; and the king, notwithstanding his indolence, prepared to revenge the indignity. The
1482. French monarch, eminent for prudence as well as perfidy, endeavoured to guard against the blow; and

[w] Rymer, vol. xi. p. 110.

by

CHAP. XXII.

1482.

by a proper distribution of presents in the court of Scotland, he incited James to make war upon England. This prince, who lived on bad terms with his own nobility, and whose force was very unequal to the enterprise, levied an army; but when he was ready to enter England, the barons, conspiring against his favourites, put them to death without trial; and the army presently disbanded. The duke of Gloceſter, attended by the duke of Albany, James's brother, who had been banished his country, entered Scotland at the head of an army, took Berwic, and obliged the Scots to accept of a peace, by which they resigned that fortress to Edward. This success emboldened the king to think more seriously of a French war; but while he was making preparations for that enterprise, he was seized with a distemper, of which he expired in the forty-second year of his age, and the twenty-third of his reign: A prince more splendid and showy, than either prudent or virtuous; brave, though cruel; addicted to pleasure, though capable of activity in great emergencies; and less fitted to prevent ills by wise precautions, than to remedy them after they took place, by his vigour and enterprise. Besides five daughters, this king left two sons: Edward prince of Wales, his successor, then in his thirteenth year, and Richard duke of York, in his ninth.

9th April. Death and character of Edward IV.

CHAP. XXIII.

EDWARD V. and RICHARD III.

Edward V.——*State of the court*——*The earl of Rivers arreſted*——*Duke of Glocester protector*——*Execution of lord Haſtings*——*The protector aims at the crown*——*Aſſumes the crown*——*Murder of Edward* V. *and of the duke of York*——*Richard* III.——*Duke of Buckingham diſcontented*——*The earl of Richmond*——*Buckingham executed*——*Invaſion by the earl of Richmond*——*Battle of Boſworth*——*Death and character of Richard* III.

EDWARD V.

CHAP. XXIII.

1483. State of the court.

DURING the later years of Edward IV. the nation having, in a great meaſure, forgotten the bloody feuds between the two roſes, and peaceably acquieſcing in the eſtabliſhed government, was agitated only by ſome court-intrigues, which, being reſtrained by the authority of the king, ſeemed nowiſe to endanger the public tranquillity. Theſe intrigues aroſe from the perpetual rivalſhip between two parties; one conſiſting of the queen and her relations, particularly the earl of Rivers her brother, and the marquis of Dorſet her ſon; the other compoſed of the ancient nobility, who envied the ſudden growth and unlimited credit of that aſpiring family[x]. At the head of this latter party was the duke of Buckingham, a man of very noble birth,

[x] Sir Thomas More, p. 481.

of

CHAP. XXIII.

of ample poſſeſſions, of great alliances, of ſhining parts; who, though he had married the queen's ſiſter, was too haughty to act in ſubſerviency to her inclinations, and aimed rather at maintaining an independent influence and authority. Lord Haſtings, the chamberlain, was another leader of the ſame party; and as this nobleman had, by his bravery and activity, as well as by his approved fidelity, acquired the confidence and favour of his maſter, he had been able, though with ſome difficulty, to ſupport himſelf againſt the credit of the queen. The lords Howard and Stanley maintained a connexion with theſe two noblemen, and brought a conſiderable acceſſion of influence and reputation to their party. All the other barons, who had no particular dependence on the queen, adhered to the ſame intereſt; and the people in general, from their natural envy againſt the prevailing power, bore great favour to the cauſe of theſe noblemen. 1483.

But Edward knew that, though he himſelf had been able to overawe thoſe rival factions, many diſorders might ariſe from their conteſts during the minority of his ſon; and he therefore took care, in his laſt illneſs, to ſummon together ſeveral of the leaders on both ſides, and, by compoſing their ancient quarrels, to provide, as far as poſſible, for the future tranquillity of the government. After expreſſing his intentions that his brother the duke of Gloceſter, then abſent in the north, ſhould be entruſted with the regency, he recommended to them peace and unanimity during the tender years of his ſon; repreſented to them the dangers which muſt attend the continuance of their animoſities; and engaged them to embrace each other with all the appearance of the moſt cordial reconciliation. But this temporary or feigned agreement laſted no longer than the king's life: He had no ſooner expired, than the jealouſies of the parties broke out afreſh: And each of them applied, by ſeparate meſſages,

CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

meſſages, to the duke of Gloceſter, and endeavoured to acquire his favour and friendſhip.

This prince, during his brother's reign, had endeavoured to live on good terms with both parties; and his high birth, his extenſive abilities, and his great ſervices, had enabled him to ſupport himſelf without falling into a dependance on either. But the new ſituation of affairs, when the ſupreme power was devolved upon him, immediately changed his meaſures; and he ſecretly determined to preſerve no longer that neutrality which he had hitherto maintained. His exorbitant ambition, unreſtrained by any principle either of juſtice or humanity, made him carry his views to the poſſeſſion of the crown itſelf; and as this object could not be attained without the ruin of the queen and her family, he fell, without heſitation, into concert with the oppoſite party. But being ſenſible, that the moſt profound diſſimulation was requiſite for effecting his criminal purpoſes, he redoubled his profeſſions of zeal and attachment to that princeſs; and he gained ſuch credit with her, as to influence her conduct in a point, which, as it was of the utmoſt importance, was violently diſputed between the oppoſite factions.

The young king, at the time of his father's death, reſided in the caſtle of Ludlow, on the borders of Wales; whither he had been ſent, that the influence of his preſence might overawe the Welch, and reſtore the tranquillity of that country, which had been diſturbed by ſome late commotions. His perſon was committed to the care of his uncle the earl of Rivers, the moſt accompliſhed nobleman in England, who, having united an uncommon taſte for literature[y] to great abilities in buſineſs, and valour in the field, was entitled, by his talents, ſtill

[y] This nobleman firſt introduced the noble art of printing into England. Caxton was recommended by him to the patronage of Edward IV. See Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors.

more

more than by nearneſs of blood, to direct the education of the young monarch. The queen, anxious to preſerve that aſcendant over her ſon, which ſhe had long maintained over her huſband, wrote to the earl of Rivers, that he ſhould levy a body of forces, in order to eſcort the king to London, to protect him during his coronation, and to keep him from falling into the hands of their enemies. The oppoſite faction, ſenſible that Edward was now of an age when great advantages could be made of his name and countenance, and was approaching to the age when he would be legally intitled to exert in perſon his authority, foreſaw, that the tendency of this meaſure was to perpetuate their ſubjection under their rivals: And they vehemently oppoſed a reſolution which they repreſented as the ſignal for renewing a civil war in the kingdom. Lord Haſtings threatened to depart inſtantly to his government of Calais [z]: The other nobles ſeemed reſolute to oppoſe force by force: And as the duke of Gloceſter, on pretence of pacifying the quarrel, had declared againſt all appearance of an armed power, which might be dangerous, and was nowiſe neceſſary, the queen, truſting to the ſincerity of his friendſhip, and overawed by ſo violent an oppoſition, recalled her orders to her brother, and deſired him to bring up no greater retinue than ſhould be neceſſary to ſupport the ſtate and dignity of the young ſovereign [a].

CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

THE duke of Gloceſter, mean while, ſet out from York, attended by a numerous train of the northern gentry. When he reached Northampton, he was joined by the duke of Buckingham, who was alſo attended by a ſplendid retinue; and as he heard that the king was hourly expected on that road, he reſolved to wait his arrival, under colour of conducting him thence in perſon to London. The earl of Rivers, apprehenſive that the place would be too

[z] Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 564, 565. [a] Sir T. More, p. 483.

narrow

CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

narrow to contain so many attendants, sent his pupil forward by another road to Stony-Stratford; and came himself to Northampton, in order to apologise for this measure, and to pay his respects to the duke of Gloucester. He was received with the greatest appearance of cordiality: He passed the evening in an amicable manner with Gloucester and Buckingham: He proceeded on the road with them next day to join the king: But as he was entering Stony-Stratford, he was arrested by orders from the duke of Gloucester [b]: Sir Richard Gray, one of the queen's sons, was at the same time put under a guard, together with sir Thomas Vaughan, who possessed a considerable office in the king's household; and all the prisoners were instantly conducted to Pomfret. Gloucester approached the young prince with the greatest demonstrations of respect; and endeavoured to satisfy him with regard to the violence committed on his uncle and brother: But Edward, much attached to these near relations, by whom he had been tenderly educated, was not such a master of dissimulation as to conceal his displeasure [c].

The earl of Rivers arrested. 1st May.

THE people, however, were extremely rejoiced at this revolution; and the duke was received in London with the loudest acclamations: But the queen no sooner received intelligence of her brother's imprisonment, than she foresaw that Gloucester's violence would not stop there, and that her own ruin, if not that of all her children, was finally determined. She therefore fled into the sanctuary of Westminster, attended by the marquis of Dorset; and she carried thither the five princesses, together with the duke of York [d]. She trusted, that the ecclesiastical privileges which had formerly, during the total ruin of her husband and family, given her protection against the fury of the Lancastrian fac-

4th May.

[b] Hist. Croyl. cont. p. 564, 565. [c] Sir T. More, p. 484.
[d] Hist. Croyl. cont. 565.

tion, would not now be violated by her brother-in-law, while her ſon was on the throne; and ſhe reſolved to await there the return of better fortune. But Gloceſter, anxious to have the duke of York in his power, propoſed to take him by force from the ſanctuary; and he repreſented to the privy-council, both the indignity put upon the government by the queen's ill-grounded apprehenſions, and the neceſſity of the young prince's appearance at the enſuing coronation of his brother. It was farther urged, that eccleſiaſtical privileges were originally intended only to give protection to unhappy men perſecuted for their debts or crimes; and were entirely uſeleſs to a perſon who, by reaſon of his tender age, could lie under the burden of neither, and who, for the ſame reaſon, was utterly incapable of claiming ſecurity from any ſanctuary. But the two archbiſhops, cardinal Bouchier the primate and Rotherham archbiſhop of York, proteſting againſt the ſacrilege of this meaſure; it was agreed, that they ſhould firſt endeavour to bring the queen to compliance by perſuaſion, before any violence ſhould be employed againſt her. Theſe prelates were perſons of known integrity and honour; and being themſelves entirely perſuaded of the duke's good intentions, they employed every argument, accompanied with earneſt entreaties, exhortations, and aſſurances, to bring her over to the ſame opinion. She long continued obſtinate, and inſiſted, that the duke of York, by living in the ſanctuary, was not only ſecure himſelf, but gave ſecurity to the king, whoſe life no one would dare to attempt, while his ſucceſſor and avenger remained in ſafety. But finding that none ſupported her in theſe ſentiments, and that force, in caſe of refuſal, was threatened by the council, ſhe at laſt complied, and produced her ſon to the two prelates. She was here on a ſudden ſtruck with a kind of preſage of his future fate: She tenderly embraced him; ſhe bedewed him with her tears;

CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

tears; and bidding him an eternal adieu, delivered him, with many expreſſions of regret and reluctance, into their cuſtody [e].

Duke of Gloceſter protector.

THE duke of Gloceſter, being the neareſt male of the royal family capable of exerciſing the government, ſeemed intitled, by the cuſtoms of the realm, to the office of protector; and the council, not waiting for the conſent of parliament, made no ſcruple of inveſting him with that high dignity [f]. The general prejudice entertained by the nobility againſt the queen and her kindred, occaſioned this precipitation and irregularity; and no one foreſaw any danger to the ſucceſſion, much leſs to the lives of the young princes, from a meaſure ſo obvious and ſo natural. Beſides that the duke had hitherto been able to cover, by the moſt profound diſſimulation, his fierce and ſavage nature; the numerous iſſue of Edward, together with the two children of Clarence, ſeemed to be an eternal obſtacle to his ambition; and it appeared equally impracticable for him to deſtroy ſo many perſons poſſeſſed of a preferable title, and imprudent to exclude them. But a man who had abandoned all principles of honour and humanity, was ſoon carried by his predominant paſſion beyond the reach of fear or precaution; and Gloceſter, having ſo far ſucceeded in his views, no longer heſitated in removing the other obſtructions which lay between him and the throne. The death of the earl of Rivers, and of the other priſoners detained in Pomfret, was firſt determined; and he eaſily obtained the conſent of the duke of Buckingham, as well as of lord Haſtings, to this violent and ſanguinary meaſure. However eaſy it was in thoſe times, to procure a ſentence againſt the moſt innocent perſon, it appeared ſtill more eaſy to diſpatch an enemy, without any trial or form of proceſs; and orders were accordingly iſſued to ſir Richard Ratcliffe, a proper inſtrument in the hands

[e] Sir T. More, p. 491. [f] Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 566.

of

of this tyrant, to cut off the heads of the priſoners. The protector then aſſailed the fidelity of Buckingham by all the arguments capable of ſwaying a vicious mind, which knew no motive of action but intereſt and ambition. He repreſented that the execution of perſons ſo nearly related to the king, whom that prince ſo openly profeſſed to love, and whoſe fate he ſo much reſented, would never paſs unpuniſhed; and all the actors in that ſcene were bound in prudence to prevent the effects of his future vengeance: That it would be impoſſible to keep the queen for ever at a diſtance from her ſon, and equally impoſſible to prevent her from inſtilling into his tender mind the thoughts of retaliating, by like executions, the ſanguinary inſults committed on her family: That the only method of obviating theſe miſchiefs was to put the ſceptre in the hands of a man of whoſe friendſhip the duke might be aſſured, and whoſe years and experience taught him to pay reſpect to merit, and to the rights of ancient nobility: And that the ſame neceſſity which had carried them ſo far in reſiſting the uſurpation of theſe intruders, muſt juſtify them in attempting farther innovations, and in making, by national conſent, a new ſettlement of the ſucceſſion. To theſe reaſons he added the offers of great private advantages to the duke of Buckingham; and he eaſily obtained from him a promiſe of ſupporting him in all his enterpriſes.

CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

The duke of Gloceſter, knowing the importance of gaining lord Haſtings, ſounded at a diſtance his ſentiments, by means of Cateſby, a lawyer, who lived in great intimacy with that nobleman; but found him impregnable in his allegiance and fidelity to the children of Edward, who had ever honoured him with his friendſhip[g]. He ſaw, therefore, that there were no longer any meaſures to be kept with him; and he determined to ruin utterly the man whom he

[g] Sir T. More, p. 493.

CHAP. XXIII.

1483.

13th June.

despaired of engaging to concur in his usurpation. On the very day when Rivers, Gray, and Vaughan were executed, or rather murdered at Pomfret, by the advice of Hastings, the protector summoned a council in the Tower; whither that nobleman, suspecting no design against him, repaired without hesitation. The duke of Gloucester was capable of committing the most bloody and treacherous murders with the utmost coolness and indifference. On taking his place at the council-table, he appeared in the easiest and most jovial humour imaginable. He seemed to indulge himself in familiar conversation with the counsellors, before they should enter on business; and having paid some compliments to Morton bishop of Ely, on the good and early strawberries which he raised in his garden at Holborn, he begged the favour of having a dish of them, which that prelate immediately dispatched a servant to bring to him. The protector then left the council, as if called away by some other business; but soon after returning with an angry and inflamed countenance, he asked them what punishment those deserved that had plotted against *his* life, who was so nearly related to the king, and was entrusted with the administration of government? Hastings replied, that they merited the punishment of traitors. *These traitors*, cried the protector, *are the sorceress, my brother's wife, and Jane Shore his mistress, with others their associates: See to what a condition they have reduced me by their incantations and witchcraft;* Upon which he laid bare his arm, all shrivelled and decayed. But the counsellors, who knew that this infirmity had attended him from his birth, looked on each other with amazement; and above all lord Hastings, who, as he had since Edward's death engaged in an intrigue with Jane Shore [h], was naturally anxious concerning the issue of these extraordi-

[h] See note [K] at the end of the volume.

nary

nary proceedings. *Certainly, my lord,* said he, *if they be guilty of these crimes they deserve the severest punishment. And do you reply to me,* exclaimed the protector, *with your* ifs *and your* ands? *You are the chief abettor of that witch Shore: You are yourself a traitor: And I swear by St. Paul, that I will not dine before your head be brought me.* He struck the table with his hand: Armed men rushed in at the signal: The counsellors were thrown into the utmost consternation: And one of the guards, as if by accident or mistake, aimed a blow with a poll-ax at lord Stanley, who aware of the danger, slunk under the table; and though he saved his life, received a severe wound in the head in the protector's presence. Hastings was seized, was hurried away, and instantly beheaded on a timber-log which lay in the court of the Tower[i]. Two hours after, a proclamation, well penned and fairly written, was read to the citizens of London, enumerating his offences, and apologising to them, from the suddenness of the discovery, for the sudden execution of that nobleman, who was very popular among them: But the saying of a merchant was much talked of on the occasion, who remarked, that the proclamation was certainly drawn by the spirit of prophecy[k]. CHAP. XXIII. 1483. Execution of lord Hastings.

Lord Stanley, the archbishop of York, the bishop of Ely, and other counsellors, were committed prisoners in different chambers of the Tower: And the protector, in order to carry on the farce of his accusations, ordered the goods of Jane Shore to be seized; and he summoned her to answer before the council for sorcery and witchcraft. But as no proofs which could be received even in that ignorant age were produced against her, he directed her to be tried in the spiritual court for her adulteries and lewdness; and she did penance in a white sheet at St. Paul's, before the whole people. This lady was born of reputable

[i] Hist. Croyl. cont. p. 566. [k] Sir T. More, p. 496.

CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

parents in London, was well educated, and married to a ſubſtantial citizen; but unhappily, views of intereſt, more than the maid's inclinations, had been conſulted in the match, and her mind, though framed for virtue, had proved unable to reſiſt the allurements of Edward, who ſolicited her favours. But while ſeduced from her duty by this gay and amorous monarch, ſhe ſtill made herſelf reſpectable by her other virtues; and the aſcendant which her charms and vivacity long maintained over him, was all employed in acts of beneficence and humanity. She was ſtill forward to oppoſe calumny, to protect the oppreſſed, to relieve the indigent; and her good offices, the genuine dictates of her heart, never waited the ſolicitation of preſents, or the hopes of reciprocal ſervices. But ſhe lived not only to feel the bitterneſs of ſhame impoſed on her by this tyrant, but to experience, in old age and poverty, the ingratitude of thoſe courtiers who had long ſolicited her friendſhip, and been protected by her credit. No one, among the great multitudes whom ſhe had obliged, had the humanity to bring her conſolation or relief: She languiſhed out her life in ſolitude and indigence: And amidſt a court, inured to the moſt atrocious crimes, the frailties of this woman juſtified all violations of friendſhip towards her, and all neglect of former obligations.

The protector aims at the crown.

THESE acts of violence, exerciſed againſt all the neareſt connexions of the late king, prognoſticated the ſevereſt fate to his defenceleſs children; and after the murder of Haſtings, the protector no longer made a ſecret of his intentions to uſurp the crown. The licentious life of Edward, who was not reſtrained in his pleaſures either by honour or prudence, afforded a pretence for declaring his marriage with the queen invalid, and all his poſterity illegitimate. It was aſſerted, that before eſpouſing the lady Elizabeth Gray, he had paid court to the lady Eleanor Talbot, daughter of the earl of Shrewſbury; and being repulſed

pulſed by the virtue of that lady, he was obliged, ere he could gratify his deſires, to conſent to a private marriage, without any witneſſes, by Stillington biſhop of Bath, who afterwards divulged the ſecret[1]. It was alſo maintained, that the act of attainder paſſed againſt the duke of Clarence had virtually incapacitated his children from ſucceeding to the crown; and theſe two families being ſet aſide, the protector remained the only true and legitimate heir of the houſe of York. But as it would be difficult, if not impoſſible, to prove the preceding marriage of the late king; and as the rule, which excludes the heirs of an attainted blood from private ſucceſſions, was never extended to the crown; the protector reſolved to make uſe of another plea ſtill more ſhameful and ſcandalous. His partiſans were taught to maintain, that both Edward IV. and the duke of Clarence were illegitimate; that the ducheſs of York had received different lovers into her bed, who were the fathers of theſe children; that their reſemblance to thoſe gallants was a ſufficient proof of their ſpurious birth; and that the duke of Gloceſter alone, of all her ſons, appeared by his features and countenance to be the true offſpring of the duke of York. Nothing can be imagined more impudent than this aſſertion, which threw ſo foul an imputation on his own mother, a princeſs of irreproachable virtue, and then alive; yet the place choſen for firſt promulgating it was the pulpit, before a large congregation, and in the protector's preſence. Dr. Shaw was appointed to preach in St. Paul's; and having choſen this paſſage for his text, *Baſtard ſlips ſhall not thrive*; he enlarged on all the topics which could diſcredit the birth of Edward IV. the duke of Clarence, and of all their children. He then broke out in a panegyric on the duke of Gloceſter; and exclaimed, "Behold this excellent prince, the ex-

CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

22d June.

[1] Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 567. Comines. Sir Thomas More, p. 482.

CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

" preſs image of his noble father, the genuine de-
" ſcendant of the houſe of York; bearing, no leſs
" in the virtues of his mind, than in the features of
" his countenance, the character of the gallant
" Richard, once your hero and favourite: He alone
" is entitled to your allegiance: He muſt deliver
" you from the dominion of all intruders: He alone
" can reſtore the loſt glory and honour of the na-
" tion." It was previouſly concerted, that as the doctor ſhould pronounce theſe words, the duke of Gloceſter ſhould enter the church; and it was expected that the audience would cry out *God ſave king Richard!* which would immediately have been laid hold of as a popular conſent, and interpreted to be the voice of the nation: But by a ridiculous miſtake, worthy of the whole ſcene, the duke did not appear till after this exclamation was already recited by the preacher. The doctor was therefore obliged to repeat his rhetorical figure out of its proper place: The audience, leſs from the abſurd conduct of the diſcourſe, than from their deteſtation of theſe proceedings, kept a profound ſilence: And the protector and his preacher were equally abaſhed at the ill ſucceſs of their ſtratagem.

But the duke was too far advanced to recede from his criminal and ambitious purpoſe. A new expedient was tried to work on the people. The mayor, who was brother to Doctor Shaw, and entirely in the protector's intereſts, called an aſſembly of the citizens; where the duke of Buckingham, who poſſeſſed ſome talents for eloquence, harangued them on the protector's title to the crown, and diſplayed thoſe numerous virtues of which he pretended that prince was poſſeſſed. He next aſked them, whether they would have the duke for king? and then ſtopped, in expectation of hearing the cry, *God ſave king Richard!* He was ſurpriſed to obſerve them ſilent; and turning about to the mayor aſked him the reaſon. The mayor replied, that perhaps they did not under-

CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

understand him. Buckingham then repeated his discourse with some variation; inforced the same topics, asked the same question, and was received with the same silence. "I now see the cause;" said the mayor; "the citizens are not accustomed to be "harangued by any but their recorder; and know "not how to answer a person of your grace's qua- "lity." The recorder, Fitz-Williams, was then commanded to repeat the substance of the duke's speech; but the man, who was averse to the office, took care, throughout his whole discourse, to have it understood that he spoke nothing of himself, and that he only conveyed to them the sense of the duke of Buckingham. Still the audience kept a profound silence: "This is wonderful obstinacy," cried the duke: "Express your meaning, my friends, one "way or other: When we apply to you on this oc- "casion, it is merely from the regard which we "bear to you. The lords and commons have suf- "ficient authority, without your consent, to ap- "point a king: But I require you here to declare, "in plain terms, whether or not you will have the "duke of Gloucester for your sovereign?" After all these efforts some of the meanest apprentices, incited by the protector's and Buckingham's servants, raised a feeble cry, *God save king Richard*[m]! The sentiments of the nation were now sufficiently declared: The voice of the people was the voice of God: And Buckingham, with the mayor, hastened to Baynard's castle, where the protector then resided, that they might make him a tender of the crown. 25th June.

When Richard was told that a great multitude was in the court, he refused to appear to them, and pretended to be apprehensive for his personal safety: A circumstance taken notice of by Buckingham, who observed to the citizens that the prince was ignorant of the whole design. At last he was per-

[m] Sir T. More, p. 496.

CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

suaded to step forth, but he still kept at some distance; and he asked the meaning of their intrusion and importunity. Buckingham told him that the nation was resolved to have him for king: The protector declared his purpose of maintaining his loyalty to the present sovereign, and exhorted them to adhere to the same resolution. He was told that the people had determined to have another prince; and if he rejected their unanimous voice, they must look out for one who would be more compliant. This argument was too powerful to be resisted: He was prevailed on to accept of the crown: And he thenceforth acted as legitimate and rightful sovereign.

The protector assumes the throne.

Murder of Edw. V. and of the duke of York.

This ridiculous farce was soon after followed by a scene truly tragical: The murder of the two young princes. Richard gave orders to sir Robert Brakenbury, constable of the Tower, to put his nephews to death; but this gentleman, who had sentiments of honour, refused to have any hand in the infamous office. The tyrant then sent for sir James Tyrrel, who promised obedience; and he ordered Brakenbury to resign to this gentleman the keys and government of the Tower for one night. Tyrrel chusing three associates, Slater, Dighton, and Forest, came in the night-time to the door of the chamber where the princes were lodged; and sending in the assassins, he bade them execute their commission, while he himself staid without. They found the young princes in bed, and fallen into a profound sleep. After suffocating them with the bolster and pillows, they showed their naked bodies to Tyrrel, who ordered them to be buried at the foot of the stairs, deep in the ground, under a heap of stones [n]. These circumstances were all confessed by the actors in the following reign; and they were never punished for the crime: Probably, because Henry, whose maxims of government were ex-

[n] Sir T. More, p. 501.

tremely

tremely arbitrary, desired to establish it as a principle, that the commands of the reigning sovereign ought to justify every enormity in those who paid obedience to them. But there is one circumstance not so easy to be accounted for: It is pretended that Richard, displeased with the indecent manner of burying his nephews, whom he had murdered, gave his chaplain orders to dig up the bodies, and to inter them in consecrated ground; and as the man died soon after, the place of their burial remained unknown, and the bodies could never be found by any search which Henry could make for them. Yet in the reign of Charles II. when there was occasion to remove some stones, and to dig in the very spot which was mentioned as the place of their first interment, the bones of two persons were there found, which by their size exactly corresponded to the age of Edward and his brother: They were concluded with certainty to be the remains of those princes, and were interred under a marble monument, by orders of king Charles [o]. Perhaps Richard's chaplain had died before he found an opportunity of executing his master's commands; and the bodies being supposed to be already removed, a diligent search was not made for them by Henry in the place where they had been buried.

CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

[o] Kennet, p. 551.

RICHARD III.

CHAP. XXIII.

1483. THE firſt acts of Richard's adminiſtration were to beſtow rewards on thoſe who had aſſiſted him in uſurping the crown, and to gain by favours thoſe who he thought were beſt able to ſupport his future government. Thomas lord Howard was created duke of Norfolk; ſir Thomas Howard his ſon, earl of Surry; lord Lovel a viſcount by the ſame name; even lord Stanley was ſet at liberty, and made ſteward of the houſehold. This nobleman had become obnoxious by his firſt oppoſition to Richard's views, and alſo by his marrying the counteſs dowager of Richmond, heir of the Somerſet family; but ſenſible of the neceſſity of ſubmitting to the preſent government, he feigned ſuch zeal for Richard's ſervice, that he was received into favour, and even found means to be entruſted with the moſt important commands by that politic and jealous tyrant.

BUT the perſon who, both from the greatneſs of his ſervices, and the power and ſplendour of his family, was beſt entitled to favours under the new government, was the duke of Buckingham; and Richard ſeemed determined to ſpare no pains or bounty in ſecuring him to his intereſts. Buckingham was deſcended from a daughter of Thomas of Woodſtock duke of Gloceſter, uncle to Richard II. and by this pedigree he not only was allied to the royal family, but had claims for dignities as well as eſtates of a very extenſive nature. The duke of Gloceſter, and Henry earl of Derby, afterwards Henry IV. had married the two daughters and coheirs of Bohun earl of Hereford, one of the greateſt of the ancient barons, whoſe immenſe property came thus to be divided into two ſhares. One was inherited

Hall sculp.t

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herited by the family of Buckingham; the other was united to the crown by the houſe of Lancaſter, and, after the attainder of that royal line, was ſeized as legally devolved to them by the ſovereigns of the houſe of York. The duke of Buckingham laid hold of the preſent opportunity, and claimed the reſtitution of that portion of the Hereford eſtate which had eſcheated to the crown, as well as of the great office of conſtable, which had long continued by inheritance in his anceſtors of that family. Richard readily complied with theſe demands, which were probably the price ſtipulated to Buckingham for his aſſiſtance in promoting the uſurpation. That nobleman was inveſted with the office of conſtable; he received a grant of the eſtate of Hereford [P]; many other dignities and honours were conferred upon him; and the king thought himſelf ſure of preſerving the fidelity of a man whoſe intereſt ſeemed ſo cloſely connected with thoſe of the preſent government. CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

Duke of Buckingham diſcontented.

BUT it was impoſſible that friendſhip could long remain inviolate between two men of ſuch corrupt minds as Richard and the duke of Buckingham. Hiſtorians aſcribe their firſt rupture to the king's refuſal of making reſtitution of the Hereford eſtate; but it is certain, from records, that he paſſed a grant for that purpoſe, and that the full demands of Buckingham were ſatisfied in this particular. Perhaps Richard was ſoon ſenſible of the danger which might enſue from conferring ſuch an immenſe property on a man of ſo turbulent a diſpoſition, and afterwards raiſed difficulties about the execution of his own grant: Perhaps he refuſed ſome other demands of Buckingham, whom he found it impoſſible to gratify for his paſt ſervices: Perhaps he reſolved, according to the uſual maxim of politicians, to ſeize the firſt opportunity of ruining this powerful ſubject, who had been the principal inſtrument of his own

[P] Dugdale's Baron. vol. i. p. 168, 169.

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CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

elevation; and the discovery of this intention begat the first discontent in the duke of Buckingham. However this may be, it is certain that the duke, soon after Richard's accession, began to form a conspiracy against the government, and attempted to overthrow that usurpation which he himself had so zealously contributed to establish.

NEVER was there in any country an usurpation more flagrant than that of Richard, or more repugnant to every principle of justice and public interest. His claim was entirely founded on impudent allegations, never attempted to be proved, some of them incapable of proof, and all of them implying scandalous reflections on his own family, and on the persons with whom he was the most nearly connected. His title was never acknowledged by any national assembly, scarcely even by the lowest populace to whom he appealed; and it had become prevalent, merely for want of some person of distinction who might stand forth against him, and give a voice to those sentiments of general detestation which arose in every bosom. Were men disposed to pardon these violations of public right, the sense of private and domestic duty, which is not to be effaced in the most barbarous times, must have begotten an abhorrence against him; and have represented the murder of the young and innocent princes, his nephews, with whose protection he had been entrusted, in the most odious colours imaginable. To endure such a bloody usurper seemed to draw disgrace upon the nation, and to be attended with immediate danger to every individual who was distinguished by birth, merit, or services. Such was become the general voice of the people; all parties were united in the same sentiments; and the Lancastrians, so long oppressed, and of late so much discredited, felt their blasted hopes again revive, and anxiously expected the consequences of these extraordinary events. The duke of Buckingham, whose family had been devoted

devoted to that intereſt, and who by his mother, a daughter of Edmund duke of Somerſet, was allied to the houſe of Lancaſter, was eaſily induced to eſpouſe the cauſe of this party, and to endeavour the reſtoring of it to its ancient ſuperiority. Morton biſhop of Ely, a zealous Lancaſtrian, whom the king had impriſoned, and had afterwards committed to the cuſtody of Buckingham, encouraged theſe ſentiments; and by his exhortations the duke caſt his eye towards the young earl of Richmond, as the only perſon who could free the nation from the tyranny of the preſent uſurper [q].

CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

HENRY earl of Richmond was at this time detained in a kind of honourable cuſtody by the duke of Britanny; and his deſcent, which ſeemed to give him ſome pretenſions to the crown, had been a great object of jealouſy both in the late and in the preſent reign. John the firſt duke of Somerſet, who was grandſon of John of Gaunt, by a ſpurious branch, but legitimated by act of parliament, had left only one daughter, Margaret; and his younger brother Edmund had ſucceeded him in his titles, and in a conſiderable part of his fortune. Margaret had eſpouſed Edmund earl of Richmond, half-brother of Henry VI. and ſon of ſir Owen Tudor and Catharine of France, relict of Henry V. and ſhe bore him only one ſon, who received the name of Henry, and who after his father's death inherited the honours and fortune of Richmond. His mother, being a widow, had eſpouſed, in ſecond marriage, ſir Henry Stafford, uncle to Buckingham, and after the death of that gentleman had married lord Stanley; but had no children by either of theſe huſbands; and her ſon Henry was thus, in the event of her death, the ſole heir of all her fortunes. But this was not the moſt conſiderable advantage which he had reaſon to expect from her ſucceſſion: He would repreſent the elder

The earl of Richmond.

[q] Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 568.

branch

CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

branch of the houſe of Somerſet; he would inherit all the title of that family to the crown; and though its claim, while any legitimate branch ſubſiſted of the houſe of Lancaſter, had always been much diſregarded, the zeal of faction, after the death of Henry VI. and the murder of prince Edward, immediately conferred a weight and conſideration upon it.

EDWARD IV. finding that all the Lancaſtrians had turned their attention towards the young earl of Richmond as the object of their hopes, thought him alſo worthy of his attention; and purſued him into his retreat in Britanny, whither his uncle the earl of Pembroke had carried him after the battle of Teukeſbury, ſo fatal to his party. He applied to Francis II. duke of Britanny, who was his ally, a weak but a good prince; and urged him to deliver up this fugitive, who might be the ſource of future diſturbances in England: But the duke, averſe to ſo diſhonourable a propoſal, would only conſent that, for the ſecurity of Edward, the young nobleman ſhould be detained in cuſtody; and he received an annual penſion from England for the ſafe-keeping or the ſubſiſtence of his priſoner. But towards the end of Edward's reign, when the kingdom was menaced with a war both from France and Scotland, the anxieties of the Engliſh court with regard to Henry were much increaſed; and Edward made a new propoſal to the duke, which covered, under the faireſt appearances, the moſt bloody and treacherous intentions. He pretended that he was deſirous of gaining his enemy, and of uniting him to his own family by a marriage with his daughter Elizabeth; and he ſolicited to have him ſent over to England, in order to execute a ſcheme which would redound ſo much to his advantage. Theſe pretences, ſeconded as is ſuppoſed by bribes to Peter Landais, a corrupt miniſter, by whom the duke was entirely governed, gained

gained credit with the court of Britanny: Henry was delivered into the hands of the Engliſh agents: He was ready to embark: When a ſuſpicion of Edward's real deſign was ſuggeſted to the duke, who recalled his orders, and thus ſaved the unhappy youth from the imminent danger which hung over him. CHAP. XII. 1483.

THESE ſymptoms of continued jealouſy in the reigning family of England, both ſeemed to give ſome authority to Henry's pretenſions, and made him the object of general favour and compaſſion, on account of the dangers and perſecutions to which he was expoſed. The univerſal deteſtation of Richard's conduct turned ſtill more the attention of the nation toward's Henry; and as all the deſcendants of the houſe of York were either women or minors, he ſeemed to be the only perſon from whom the nation could expect the expulſion of the odious and bloody tyrant. But notwithſtanding theſe circumſtances, which were ſo favourable to him, Buckingham and the biſhop of Ely well knew that there would ſtill lie many obſtacles in his way to the throne; and that though the nation had been much divided between Henry VI. and the duke of York, while preſent poſſeſſion and hereditary right ſtood in oppoſition to each other; yet as ſoon as theſe titles were united in Edward IV. the bulk of the people had come over to the reigning family; and the Lancaſtrians had extremely decayed, both in numbers and in authority. It was therefore ſuggeſted by Morton, and readily aſſented to by the duke, that the only means of overturning the preſent uſurpation, was to unite the oppoſite factions, by contracting a marriage between the earl of Richmond and the princeſs Elizabeth, eldeſt daughter of king Edward, and thereby blending together the oppoſite pretenſions of their families, which had ſo long been the ſource of public diſorders and convulſions. They were ſenſible that the people were extremely deſirous of repoſe, after ſo many bloody and deſtructive commotions; that

CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

that both Yorkiſts and Lancaſtrians, who now lay equally under oppreſſion, would embrace this ſcheme with ardour; and that the proſpect of reconciling the two parties, which was in itſelf ſo deſirable an end, would, when added to the general hatred againſt the preſent government, render their cauſe abſolutely invincible. In conſequence of theſe views the prelate, by means of Reginald Bray, ſteward to the counteſs of Richmond, firſt opened the project of ſuch an union to that lady; and the plan appeared ſo advantageous for her ſon, and at the ſame time ſo likely to ſucceed, that it admitted not of the leaſt heſitation. Dr. Lewis, a Welch phyſician, who had acceſs to the queen-dowager in her ſanctuary, carried the propoſals to her; and found, that revenge for the murder of her brother and of her three ſons, apprehenſions for her ſurviving family, and indignation againſt her confinement, eaſily overcame all her prejudices againſt the houſe of Lancaſter, and procured her approbation of a marriage to which the age and birth, as well as the preſent ſituation of the parties, ſeemed ſo naturally to invite them. She ſecretly borrowed a ſum of money in the city, ſent it over to the earl of Richmond, required his oath to celebrate the marriage as ſoon as he ſhould arrive in England, adviſed him to levy as many foreign forces as poſſible, and promiſed to join him on his firſt appearance, with all the friends and partiſans of her family.

THE plan being thus laid upon the ſolid foundations of good ſenſe and ſound policy, it was ſecretly communicated to the principal perſons of both parties in all the counties of England; and a wonderful alacrity appeared in every order of men to forward its ſucceſs and completion. But it was impoſſible that ſo extenſive a conſpiracy could be conducted in ſo ſecret a manner as entirely to eſcape the jealous and vigilant eye of Richard; and he ſoon received intelligence that his enemies, headed by

the duke of Buckingham, were forming ſome de- CHAP. XXIII. 1483.
ſign againſt his authority. He immediately put himſelf in a poſture of defence by levying troops in the North; and he ſummoned the duke to appear at court, in ſuch terms as ſeemed to promiſe him a renewal of their former amity. But that nobleman, well acquainted with the barbarity and treachery of Richard, replied only, by taking arms in Wales, and giving the ſignal to his accomplices for a general inſurrection in all parts of England. But at October.
that very time there happened to fall ſuch heavy rains, ſo inceſſant and continued, as exceeded any known in the memory of man; and the Severne, with the other rivers in that neighbourhood, ſwelled to a height which rendered them impaſſable, and prevented Buckingham from marching into the heart of England to join his aſſociates. The Welſhmen, partly moved by ſuperſtition at this extraordinary event, partly diſtreſſed by famine in their camp, fell off from him; and Buckingham, finding himſelf deſerted by his followers, put on a diſguiſe, and took ſhelter in the houſe of Banniſter, an old ſervant of his family. But being detected in his Buckingham executed.
retreat, he was brought to the king at Saliſbury; and was inſtantly executed, according to the ſummary method practiſed in that age[1]. The other conſpirators, who took arms in four different places, at Exeter, at Saliſbury, at Newbury, and at Maidſtone, hearing of the duke of Buckingham's misfortunes, deſpaired of ſucceſs, and immediately diſperſed themſelves.

THE marquis of Dorſet and the biſhop of Ely made their eſcape beyond ſea: Many others were equally fortunate: Several fell into Richard's hands, of whom he made ſome examples. His executions ſeem not to have been remarkably ſevere; though we are told of one gentleman, William Colling-

[1] Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 568.

CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

bourne, who suffered under colour of this rebellion, but in reality for a distich of quibbling verses which he had composed against Richard and his ministers[s]. The earl of Richmond, in concert with his friends, had set sail from St. Malo's, carrying on board a body of 5000 men, levied in foreign parts; but his fleet being at first driven back by a storm, he appeared not on the coast of England till after the dispersion of all his friends; and he found himself obliged to return to the Court of Britanny.

1484. 23d of Jan.

THE king, every where triumphant, and fortified by this unsuccessful attempt to dethrone him, ventured at last to summon a parliament; a measure which his crimes and flagrant usurpation had induced him hitherto to decline. Though it was natural that the parliament, in a contest of national parties, should always adhere to the victor, he seems to have apprehended, lest his title, founded on no principle and supported by no party, might be rejected by that assembly. But his enemies being now at his feet, the parliament had no choice left but to recognise his authority, and acknowledge his right to the crown. His only son Edward, then a youth of twelve years of age, was created prince of Wales: The duties of tonnage and poundage were granted to the king for life: And Richard, in order to reconcile the nation to his government, passed some popular laws, particularly one against the late practice of extorting money on pretence of benevolence.

ALL the other measures of the king tended to the same object. Sensible, that the only circumstance which could give him security, was to gain the con-

[s] The lines were:

The Rat, the Cat, and Lovel that Dog,
Rule all England under the Hog.

Alluding to the names of Ratcliffe and Catesby; and to Richard's arms, which were a boar.

fidence of the Yorkiſts, he paid court to the queen-dowager with ſuch art and addreſs, made ſuch earneſt proteſtations of his ſincere good-will and friendſhip, that this princeſs, tired of confinement, and deſpairing of any ſucceſs from her former projects, ventured to leave her ſanctuary, and to put herſelf and her daughters into the hands of the tyrant. But he ſoon carried farther his views for the eſtabliſhment of his throne. He had married Anne the ſecond daughter of the earl of Warwick, and widow of Edward prince of Wales, whom Richard himſelf had murdered; but this princeſs having born him but one ſon, who died about this time, he conſidered her as an invincible obſtacle to the ſettlement of his fortune, and he was believed to have carried her off by poiſon; a crime for which the public could not be ſuppoſed to have any ſolid proof, but which the uſual tenour of his conduct made it reaſonable to ſuſpect. He now thought it in his power to remove the chief perils which threatened his government. The earl of Richmond, he knew, could never be formidable but from his projected marriage with the princeſs Elizabeth, the true heir of the crown; and he therefore intended, by means of a papal diſpenſation, to eſpouſe, himſelf, this princeſs, and thus to unite in his own family their contending titles. The queen-dowager, eager to recover her loſt authority, neither ſcrupled this alliance, which was very unuſual in England, and was regarded as inceſtuous; nor felt any horror at marrying her daughter to the murderer of her three ſons and of her brother: She even joined ſo far her intereſts with thoſe of the uſurper, that ſhe wrote to all her partiſans, and among the reſt, to her ſon the marquis of Dorſet, deſiring them to withdraw from the earl of Richmond; an injury which the earl could never afterwards forgive: The court of Rome was applied to for a diſpenſation:

CHAP. XXIII. 1484.

CHAP. XXIII. 1484.

Richard thought that he could eaſily defend himſelf during the interval, till it arrived; and he had afterwards the agreeable proſpect of a full and ſecure ſettlement. He flattered himſelf that the Engliſh nation, ſeeing all danger removed of a diſputed ſucceſſion, would then acquieſce under the dominion of a prince, who was of mature years, of great abilities, and of a genius qualified for government; and that they would forgive him all the crimes which he had committed, in paving his way to the throne.

But the crimes of Richard were ſo horrid and ſo ſhocking to humanity, that the natural ſentiments of men, without any political or public views, were ſufficient to render his government unſtable; and every perſon of probity and honour was earneſt to prevent the ſceptre from being any longer polluted by that bloody and faithleſs hand which held it. All the exiles flocked to the earl of Richmond in Britanny, and exhorted him to haſten his attempt for a new invaſion, and to prevent the marriage of the princeſs Elizabeth, which muſt prove fatal to all his hopes. The earl, ſenſible of the urgent neceſſity, but dreading the treachery of Peter Landais, who had entered into a negociation with Richard for betraying him, was obliged to attend only to his preſent ſafety; and he made his eſcape to the court of France. The miniſters of Charles VIII. who had now ſucceeded to the throne after the death of his father Lewis, gave him countenance and protection; and being deſirous of raiſing diſturbance to Richard, they ſecretly encouraged the earl in the levies which he made for the ſupport of his enterpriſe upon England. The earl of Oxford, whom Richard's ſuſpicions had thrown into confinement, having made his eſcape, here joined Henry; and inflamed his ardour for the attempt, by the favourable accounts which he brought of the diſpoſitions

CHAP. XXIII.

1485.

sitions of the English nation, and their universal hatred of Richard's crimes and usurpation.

Invasion by the earl of Richmond. 7th Aug.

THE earl of Richmond set sail from Harfleur in Normandy with a small army of about 2000 men; and after a navigation of six days, he arrived at Milford-haven in Wales, where he landed without opposition. He directed his course to that part of the kingdom, in hopes that the Welsh, who regarded him as their countryman, and who had been already prepossessed in favour of his cause by means of the duke of Buckingham, must join his standard, and enable him to make head against the established government. Richard, who knew not in what quarter he might expect the invader, had taken post at Nottingham, in the centre of the kingdom; and having given commissions to different persons in the several counties, whom he empowered to oppose his enemy, he purposed in person to fly on the first alarm to the place exposed to danger. Sir Rice ap-Thomas and Sir Walter Herbert were entrusted with his authority in Wales; but the former immediately deserted to Henry; the second made but feeble opposition to him: And the earl, advancing towards Shrewsbury, received every day some reinforcement from his partisans. Sir Gilbert Talbot joined him with all the vassals and retainers of the family of Shrewsbury: Sir Thomas Bouchier and sir Walter Hungerford brought their friends to share his fortunes; and the appearance of men of distinction in his camp made already his cause wear a favourable aspect.

BUT the danger to which Richard was chiefly exposed, proceeded not so much from the zeal of his open enemies, as from the infidelity of his pretended friends. Scarce any nobleman of distinction was sincerely attached to his cause, except the duke of Norfolk; and all those who feigned the most loyalty were only watching for an opportunity to betray and desert him. But the persons of whom

CHAP. XXIII. 1485.

he entertained the greateſt ſuſpicion, were lord Stanley and his brother ſir William; whoſe connexions with the family of Richmond, notwithſtanding their profeſſions of attachment to his perſon, were never entirely forgotten or overlooked by him. When he empowered lord Stanley to levy forces, he ſtill retained his eldeſt ſon lord Strange, as a pledge for his fidelity; and that nobleman was, on this account, obliged to employ great caution and reſerve in his proceedings. He raiſed a powerful body of his friends and retainers in Cheſhire and Lancaſhire, but without openly declaring himſelf: And though Henry had received ſecret aſſurances of his friendly intentions, the armies on both ſides knew not what to infer from his equivocal behaviour. The two rivals at laſt approached each other at Boſworth near Leiceſter; Henry, at the head of ſix thouſand men, Richard with an army of above double the number; and a deciſive action was every hour expected between them. Stanley, who commanded above ſeven thouſand men, took care to poſt himſelf at Atherſtone, not far from the hoſtile camps; and he made ſuch a diſpoſition as enabled him on occaſion to join either party. Richard had too much ſagacity not to diſcover his intentions from thoſe movements; but he kept the ſecret from his own men for fear of diſcouraging them: He took not immediate revenge on Stanley's ſon, as ſome of his courtiers adviſed him; becauſe he hoped that ſo valuable a pledge would induce the father to prolong ſtill farther his ambiguous conduct: And he haſtened to decide by arms the quarrel with his competitor; being certain, that a victory over the earl of Richmond would enable him to take ample revenge on all his enemies, open and concealed.

22d Aug. Battle of Boſworth.

The van of Richmond's army, conſiſting of archers, was commanded by the earl of Oxford: Sir Gilbert Talbot led the right wing; ſir John Savage

Savage the left: The earl himſelf, accompanied by his uncle the earl of Pembroke, placed himſelf in the main body. Richard alſo took poſt in *his* main body, and entruſted the command of his van to the duke of Norfolk: As his wings were never engaged, we have not learned the names of the ſeveral commanders. Soon after the battle began, lord Stanley, whoſe conduct in this whole affair diſcovers great precaution and abilities, appeared in the field, and declared for the earl of Richmond. This meaſure, which was unexpected to the men, though not to their leaders, had a proportional effect on both armies: It inſpired unuſual courage into Henry's ſoldiers; it threw Richard's into diſmay and confuſion. The intrepid tyrant, ſenſible of his deſperate ſituation, caſt his eye around the field, and deſcrying his rival at no great diſtance, he drove againſt him with fury, in hopes that either Henry's death or his own would decide the victory between them. He killed with his own hands ſir William Brandon, ſtandard-bearer to the earl: He diſmounted ſir John Cheyney: He was now within reach of Richmond himſelf, who declined not the combat; when ſir William Stanley, breaking in with his troops, ſurrounded Richard, who, fighting bravely to the laſt moment, was overwhelmed by numbers, and periſhed by a fate too mild and honourable for his multiplied and deteſtable enormities. His men every where fought for ſafety by flight. CHAP. XXIII. 1485. Death

THERE fell in this battle about four thouſand of the vanquiſhed; and among theſe the duke of Norfolk, lord Ferrars of Chartley, ſir Richard Ratcliffe, ſir Robert Piercy, and ſir Robert Brackenbury. The loſs was inconſiderable on the ſide of the victors. Sir William Catesby, a great inſtrument of Richard's crimes, was taken, and ſoon after beheaded, with ſome others, at Leiceſter. The

CHAP. XXIII. 1485.

body of Richard was found in the field covered with dead enemies, and all beſmeared with blood: It was thrown careleſsly acroſs a horſe; was carried to Leiceſter amidſt the ſhouts of the inſulting ſpectators; and was interred in the Gray-Friars church of that place.

and character of Richard III.

THE hiſtorians who favour Richard (for even this tyrant has met with partiſans among the later writers) maintain, that he was well qualified for government, had he legally obtained it; and that he committed no crimes but ſuch as were neceſſary to procure him poſſeſſion of the crown: But this is a poor apology, when it is confeſſed that he was ready to commit the moſt horrid crimes which appeared neceſſary for that purpoſe; and it is certain, that all his courage and capacity, qualities in which he really ſeems not to have been deficient, would never have made compenſation to the people for the danger of the precedent, and for the contagious example of vice and murder, exalted upon the throne. This prince was of a ſmall ſtature, humpbacked, and had a harſh diſagreeable countenance; ſo that his body was in every particular no leſs deformed than his mind.

* * * * * *

THUS have we purſued the hiſtory of England through a ſeries of many barbarous ages; till we have at laſt reached the dawn of civility and ſcience, and have the proſpect both of greater certainty in our hiſtorical narrations, and of being able to preſent to the reader a ſpectacle more worthy of his attention. The want of certainty, however, and of circumſtances, is not alike to be complained of throughout every period of this long narration: This iſland poſſeſſes many ancient hiſtorians of good credit, as well as many hiſtorical monuments; and it

it is rare, that the annals of ſo uncultivated a people, as were the Engliſh as well as the other European nations, after the decline of Roman learning, have been tranſmitted to poſterity ſo complete, and with ſo little mixture of falſehood and of fable. This advantage we owe entirely to the clergy of the church of Rome; who, founding their authority on their ſuperior knowledge, preſerved the precious literature of antiquity from a total extinction [t]; and under ſhelter of their numerous privileges and immunities, acquired a ſecurity by means of the ſuperſtition, which they would in vain have claimed from the juſtice and humanity of thoſe turbulent and licentious ages. Nor is the ſpectacle altogether unentertaining and uninſtructive which the hiſtory of thoſe times preſents to us. The view of human manners, in all their variety of appearances, is both profitable and agreeable; and if the aſpect in ſome periods ſeem horrid and deformed, we may thence learn to cheriſh with the greater anxiety that ſcience and civility which has ſo cloſe a connexion with virtue and humanity, and which, as it is a ſovereign antidote againſt ſuperſtition, is alſo the moſt effectual remedy againſt vice and diſorders of every kind. CHAP. XXIII.

THE riſe, progreſs, perfection, and decline of art and ſcience, are curious objects of contemplation, and intimately connected with a narration of civil tranſactions. The events of no particular period can be fully accounted for, but by conſidering the degrees of advancement which men have reached in thoſe particulars.

THOSE who caſt their eye on the general revolutions of ſociety will find, that, as almoſt all improvements of the human mind had reached nearly to their ſtate of perfection about the age of Auguſtus, there was a ſenſible decline from that point

[t] See note [L] at the end of the volume.

or

CHAP. XXIII.

or period; and men thenceforth relapſed gradually into ignorance and barbariſm. The unlimited extent of the Roman empire, and the conſequent deſpotiſm of its monarchs, extinguiſhed all emulation, debaſed the generous ſpirits of men, and depreſſed that noble flame by which all the refined arts muſt be cheriſhed and enlivened. The military government which ſoon ſucceeded, rendered even the lives and properties of men inſecure and precarious; and proved deſtructive to thoſe vulgar and more neceſſary arts of agriculture, manufactures, and commerce; and, in the end, to the military art and genius itſelf, by which alone the immenſe fabric of the empire could be ſupported. The irruption of the barbarous nations which ſoon followed, overwhelmed all human knowledge, which was already far in its decline: and men ſunk every age deeper into ignorance, ſtupidity, and ſuperſtition; till the light of antient ſcience and hiſtory had very nearly ſuffered a total extinction in all the European nations.

But there is a point of depreſſion, as well as of exaltation, from which human affairs naturally return in a contrary direction, and beyond which they ſeldom paſs either in their advancement or decline. The period in which the people of Chriſtendom were the loweſt ſunk in ignorance, and conſequently in diſorders of every kind, may juſtly be fixed at the eleventh century, about the age of William the Conqueror: And from that æra, the ſun of ſcience beginning to re-aſcend, threw out many gleams of light, which preceded the full morning when letters were revived in the fifteenth century. The Danes, and other northern people, who had ſo long infeſted all the coaſts, and even the inland parts of Europe, by their depredations, having now learned the arts of tillage and agriculture, found a certain ſubſiſtence at home, and were no longer tempted to deſert their induſtry, in order to ſeek a precarious liveli-

hood

hood by rapine and by the plunder of their neighbours. The feudal governments alſo among the more ſouthern nations were reduced to a kind of ſyſtem; and though that ſtrange ſpecies of civil polity was ill fitted to enſure either liberty or tranquillity, it was preferable to the univerſal licence and diſorder which had every where preceded it. But perhaps there was no event which tended farther to the improvements of the age, than one which has not been much remarked, the accidental finding of a copy of Juſtinian's Pandects, about the year 1130, in the town of Amalfi in Italy. CHAP. XXIII.

The eccleſiaſtics, who had leiſure, and ſome inclination to ſtudy, immediately adopted with zeal this excellent ſyſtem of juriſprudence, and ſpread the knowledge of it throughout every part of Europe. Beſides the intrinſic merit of the performance, it was recommended to them by its original connexion with the imperial city of Rome, which being the ſeat of their religion ſeemed to acquire a new luſtre and authority by the diffuſion of its laws over the weſtern world. In leſs than ten years after the diſcovery of the Pandects, Vacarius, under the protection of Theobald, archbiſhop of Canterbury, read public lectures of civil law in the univerſity of Oxford; and the clergy every where, by their example as well as exhortation, were the means of diffuſing the higheſt eſteem for this new ſcience. That order of men having large poſſeſſions to defend, was in a manner neceſſitated to turn their ſtudies towards the law; and their properties being often endangered by the violence of the princes and barons, it became their intereſt to enforce the obſervance of general and equitable rules, from which alone they could receive protection. As they poſſeſſed all the knowledge of the age, and were alone acquainted with the habits of thinking, the practice as well as ſcience of the law fell moſtly into their hands: And though

CHAP. XXIII.

though the close connexion, which, without any necessity, they formed between the canon and civil law, begat a jealousy in the laity of England, and prevented the Roman jurisprudence from becoming the municipal law of the country, as was the case in many states of Europe, a great part of it was secretly transferred into the practice of the courts of justice, and the imitation of their neighbours made the English gradually endeavour to raise their own law from its original state of rudeness and imperfection.

It is easy to see what advantages Europe must have reaped by its inheriting at once from the ancients so complete an art, which was also so necessary for giving security to all other arts, and which, by refining, and still more by bestowing solidity on the judgment, served as a model to farther improvements. The sensible utility of the Roman law, both to public and private interest, recommended the study of it, at a time when the more exalted and speculative sciences carried no charms with them; and thus the last branch of antient literature which remained uncorrupted, was happily the first transmitted to the modern world: For it is remarkable, that in the decline of Roman learning, when the philosophers were universally infected with superstition and sophistry, and the poets and historians with barbarism, the lawyers, who in other countries are seldom models of science or politeness, were yet able, by the constant study and close imitation of their predecessors, to maintain the same good sense in their decisions and reasonings, and the same purity in their language and expression.

What bestowed an additional merit on the civil law, was the extreme imperfection of that jurisprudence which preceded it among all the European nations, especially among the Saxons or antient English. The absurdities which prevailed at that

time in the adminiſtration of juſtice, may be conceiv- CHAP. XXIII.
ed from authentic monuments which remain of the ancient Saxon laws; where a pecuniary commutation was received for every crime, where ſtated prices were fixed for men's lives and members, where private revenges were authoriſed for all injuries, where the uſe of the ordeal, corſnet, and afterwards of the duel, was the received method of proof, and where the judges were ruſtic freeholders, aſſembled of a ſudden, and deciding a cauſe from one debate or altercation of the parties. Such a ſtate of ſociety was very little advanced beyond the rude ſtate of nature: Violence univerſally prevailed, inſtead of general and equitable maxims: The pretended liberty of the times was only an incapacity of ſubmitting to government: And men, not protected by law in their lives and properties, ſought ſhelter by their perſonal ſervitude and attachments under ſome powerful chieftain, or by voluntary combinations.

THE gradual progreſs of improvement raiſed the Europeans ſomewhat above this uncultivated ſtate; and affairs, in this iſland particularly, took early a turn which was more favourable to juſtice and to liberty. Civil employments and occupations ſoon became honourable among the Engliſh: The ſituation of that people rendered not the perpetual attention to wars ſo neceſſary as among their neighbours, and all regard was not confined to the military profeſſion: The gentry, and even the nobility, began to deem an acquaintance with the law a neceſſary part of education: They were leſs diverted than afterwards from ſtudies of this kind by other ſciences; and in the age of Henry VI. as we are told by Forteſcue, there were in the inns of court about two thouſand ſtudents, moſt of them men of honourable birth, who gave application to this branch of civil knowledge: A circumſtance which proves that a conſiderable progreſs was already made in the

ſcience

CHAP. XXII.

science of government, and which prognosticated a still greater.

One chief advantage which resulted from the introduction and progress of the arts, was the introduction and progress of freedom; and this consequence affected men both in their *personal* and *civil* capacities.

If we consider the ancient state of Europe, we shall find that the far greater part of the society were everywhere bereaved of their *personal* liberty, and lived entirely at the will of their masters. Every one that was not noble was a slave: The peasants were sold along with the land: The few inhabitants of cities were not in a better condition: Even the gentry themselves were subjected to a long train of subordination under the greater barons or chief vassals of the crown; who, though seemingly placed in a high state of splendour, yet, having but a slender protection from law, were exposed to every tempest of the state, and, by the precarious condition in which they lived, paid dearly for the power of oppressing and tyrannising over their inferiors. The first incident which broke in upon this violent system of government, was the practice begun in Italy, and imitated in France, of erecting communities and corporations, endowed with privileges and a separate municipal government, which gave them protection against the tyranny of the barons, and which the prince himself deemed it prudent to respect [u]. The relaxation of

[u] There appear early symptoms of the jealousy entertained by the barons against the progress of the arts, as destructive of their licentious power. A law was enacted, 7 Henry IV. chap 17. prohibiting any one who did not possess twenty shillings a year in land, from binding his sons apprentices to any trade. They found already that the cities began to drain the country of the labourers and husbandmen; and did not foresee how much the increase of commerce would increase the value of their estates. See farther, Cotton, p. 179. The kings, to encourage the boroughs, granted them this privilege, that any villain who had lived a twelvemonth in any corporation, and had been of the guild, should be thenceforth regarded as free.

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the feudal tenures, and an execution ſomewhat ſtricter, of the public law, beſtowed an independence on vaſſals which was unknown to their forefathers. And even the peaſants themſelves, though later than other orders of the ſtate, made their eſcape from thoſe bonds of villenage or ſlavery in which they had formerly been retained. CHAP. XXIII.

It may appear ſtrange, that the progreſs of the arts, which ſeems, among the Greeks and Romans, to have daily increaſed the number of ſlaves, ſhould, in later times, have proved ſo general a ſource of liberty; but this difference in the events proceeded from a great difference in the circumſtances which attended thoſe inſtitutions. The ancient barons, obliged to maintain themſelves continually in a military poſture, and little emulous of elegance or ſplendor, employed not their villains as domeſtic ſervants, much leſs as manufacturers; but compoſed their retinue of freemen, whoſe military ſpirit rendered the chieftain formidable to his neighbours, and who were ready to attend him in every warlike enterpriſe. The villains were entirely occupied in the cultivation of their maſter's land, and paid their rents either in corn and cattle and other produce of the farm, or in ſervile offices, which they performed about the baron's family, and upon the farms which he retained in his own poſſeſſion. In proportion as agriculture improved and money increaſed, it was found that theſe ſervices, though extremely burdenſome to the villain, were of little advantage to the maſter; and that the produce of a large eſtate could be much more conveniently diſpoſed of by the peaſants themſelves who raiſed it, than by the landlord or his bailiff, who were formerly accuſtomed to receive it. A commutation was therefore made of rents for ſervices, and of money-rents for thoſe in kind; and as men in a ſubſequent age diſcovered that farms were better

CHAP. XXIII.

ter cultivated where the farmer enjoyed a security in his possession, the practice of granting leases to the peasant began to prevail, which entirely broke the bonds of servitude, already much relaxed from the former practices. After this manner villenage went gradually into disuse throughout the more civilized parts of Europe: The interest of the master as well as that of the slave concurred in this alteration. The latest laws which we find in England for enforcing or regulating this species of servitude were enacted in the reign of Henry VII. And though the ancient statutes on this subject remain still unrepealed by parliament, it appears that, before the end of Elizabeth, the distinction of villain and freeman was totally, though insensibly, abolished, and that no person remained in the state to whom the former laws could be applied.

THUS *personal* freedom became almost general in Europe; an advantage which paved the way for the increase of *political* or *civil* liberty, and which, even where it was not attended with this salutary effect, served to give the members of the community some of the most considerable advantages of it.

THE constitution of the English government, ever since the invasion of this island by the Saxons, may boast of this pre-eminence, that in no age the will of the monarch was entirely ever absolute and uncontrolled: But in other respects the balance of power has extremely shifted among the several orders of the state; and this fabric has experienced the same mutability that has attended all human institutions.

THE ancient Saxons, like the other Geman nations, where each individual was enured to arms, and where the independence of men was secured by a great equality of possessions, seem to have admitted a considerable mixture of democracy into their form of government, and to have been one of the

the freeſt nations of which there remains any account in the records of hiſtory. After this tribe was ſettled in England, eſpecially after the diſſolution of the Heptarchy, the great extent of the kingdom produced a great inequality in property; and the balance ſeems to have inclined to the ſide of ariſtocracy. The Norman conqueſt threw more authority into the hands of the ſovereign, which however admitted of great control; though derived leſs from the general forms of the conſtitution, which were inaccurate and irregular, than from the independent power enjoyed by each baron in his particular diſtrict or province. The eſtabliſhment of the great charter exalted ſtill higher the ariſtocracy, impoſed regular limits on royal power, and gradually introduced ſome mixture of democracy into the conſtitution. But even during this period, from the acceſſion of Edward I. to the death of Richard III. the condition of the commons was nowiſe eligible; a kind of Poliſh ariſtocracy prevailed; and though the kings were limited, the people were as yet far from being free. It required the authority almoſt abſolute of the ſovereigns, which took place in the ſubſequent period, to pull down thoſe diſorderly and licentious tyrants, who were equally averſe from peace and from freedom, and to eſtabliſh that regular execution of the laws, which in a following age enabled the people to erect a regular and equitable plan of liberty. CHAP. XXIII.

In each of theſe ſucceſſive alterations, the only rule of government which is intelligible or carries any authority with it, is the eſtabliſhed practice of the age, and the maxims of adminiſtration which are at that time prevalent and univerſally aſſented to. Thoſe who, from a pretended reſpect to antiquity, appeal at every turn to an original plan of the conſtitution, only cover their turbulent ſpirit and their private ambition under the appearance of venerable forms; and whatever period they pitch on for their

CHAP. XXIII.

model, they may ſtill be carried back to a more ancient period, where they will find the meaſures of power entirely different, and where every circumſtance, by reaſon of the greater barbarity of the times, will appear ſtill leſs worthy of imitation. Above all, a civilized nation, like the Engliſh, who have happily eſtabliſhed the moſt perfect and moſt accurate ſyſtem of liberty that was ever found compatible with government, ought to be cautious in appealing to the practice of their anceſtors, or regarding the maxims of uncultivated ages as certain rules for their preſent conduct. An acquaintance with the ancient periods of their government is chiefly *uſeful*, by inſtructing them to cheriſh their preſent conſtitution, from a compariſon or contraſt with the condition of thoſe diſtant times. And it is alſo *curious*, by ſhewing them the remote and commonly faint and diſfigured originals of the moſt finiſhed and moſt noble inſtitutions, and by inſtructing them in the great mixture of accident which commonly concurs with a ſmall ingredient of wiſdom and foreſight in erecting the complicated fabric of the moſt perfect government.

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J. K. Sherwin

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CHAP. XXIV.

HENRY VII.

Acceſſion of Henry VII.——*His title to the crown*——*King's prejudice againſt the houſe of York*——*His joyful reception in London*——*His coronation*——*Sweating ſickneſs*——*A parliament*——*Entail of the crown*——*King's marriage*——*An inſurrection*——*Diſcontents of the people*——*Lambert Simnel*——*Revolt of Ireland*——*Intrigues of the dutcheſs of Burgundy*——*Lambert Simnel invades England*——*Battle of Stoke.*

THE victory which the earl of Richmond gained at Boſworth was entirely deciſive; being attended as well with the total rout and diſperſion of the royal army, as with the death of the king himſelf. Joy for this great ſucceſs ſuddenly prompted the ſoldiers in the field of battle to beſtow on their victorious general the appellation of King, which he had not hitherto aſſumed; and the acclamations of *Long live Henry the Seventh!* by a natural and unpremeditated movement, reſounded from all quarters. To beſtow ſome appearance of formality on this ſpecies of military election, ſir William Stanley brought a crown of ornament which Richard wore in battle, and which had been found among the ſpoils; and he put it on the head of the victor. Henry himſelf remained not in ſuſpenſe; but immediately without heſitation accepted of the magnificent preſent which was tendered him. He was come to the criſis of his fortune; and being obliged ſuddenly to determine himſelf, amidſt great difficulties which he muſt have frequently revolved in his mind, he choſe that part

CHAP. XXIV.

1485. Auguſt 22.

Acceſſion of Henry VII.

CHAP. XXIV.

which his ambition ſuggeſted to him, and to which he ſeemed to be invited by his preſent ſucceſs.

1485. His title to the crown.

THERE were many titles on which Henry could found his right to the crown; but no one of them free from great objections, if conſidered with reſpect either to juſtice or to policy.

DURING ſome years Henry had been regarded as heir to the houſe of Lancaſter by the party attached to that family; but the title of the houſe of Lancaſter itſelf was generally thought to be very ill-founded. Henry IV. who had firſt raiſed it to royal dignity, had never clearly defined the foundation of his claim; and while he plainly invaded the order of ſucceſſion, he had not acknowledged the election of the people. The parliament, it is true, had often recogniſed the title of the Lancaſtrian princes; but theſe votes had little authority, being conſidered as inſtances of complaiſance towards a family in poſſeſſion of preſent power: And they had accordingly been often reverſed during the late prevalence of the houſe of York. Prudent men alſo, who had been willing, for the ſake of peace, to ſubmit to any eſtabliſhed authority, deſired not to ſee the claims of that family revived; claims which muſt produce many convulſions at preſent, and which diſjointed for the future the whole ſyſtem of hereditary right. Beſides, allowing the title of the houſe of Lancaſter to be legal, Henry himſelf was not the true heir of that family; and nothing but the obſtinacy natural to faction, which never without reluctance will ſubmit to an antagoniſt, could have engaged the Lancaſtrians to adopt the earl of Richmond as their head. His mother indeed, Margaret counteſs of Richmond, was ſole daughter and heir of the duke of Somerſet, ſprung from John of Gaunt duke of Lancaſter: But the deſcent of the Somerſet line was itſelf illegitimate, and even adulterous. And though the duke of Lancaſter had obtained the legitimation of

of his natural children by a patent from Richard II. CHAP. XXIV. confirmed in parliament, it might juſtly be doubted whether this deed could beſtow any title to the crown; ſince in the patent itſelf all the privileges conferred by it are fully enumerated, and the ſucceſſion to the kingdom is expreſsly excluded [w]. In all ſettlements of the crown made during the reigns of the Lancaſtrian princes, the line of Somerſet had been entirely overlooked; and it was not till the failure of the legitimate branch, that men had paid any attention to their claim. And, to add to the general diſſatisfaction againſt Henry's title, his mother, from whom he derived all his right, was ſtill alive; and evidently preceded him in the order of ſucceſſion. 1485.

THE title of the houſe of York, both from the plain reaſon of the caſe, and from the late popular government of Edward IV. had univerſally obtained the preference in the ſentiments of the people; and Henry might ingraft his claim on the rights of that family, by his intended marriage with the princeſs Elizabeth, the heir of it; a marriage which he had ſolemnly promiſed to celebrate, and to the expectation of which he had chiefly owed all his paſt ſucceſſes. But many reaſons diſſuaded Henry from adopting this expedient. Were he to receive the crown only in the right of his conſort, his power he knew would be very limited; and he muſt expect rather to enjoy the bare title of king by a ſort of courteſy, than poſſeſs the real authority which belongs to it. Should the princeſs die before him without iſſue, he muſt deſcend from the throne, and give place to the next in ſucceſſion: And even if his bed ſhould be bleſt with offspring, it ſeemed dangerous to expect that filial piety in his children would prevail over the ambition of obtaining preſent poſſeſſion of regal power. An act of parliament, in-

[w] Rymer, tom. vii. p. 849. Coke's Inſt. 4 Inſt. part 1. p. 37.

CHAP. XXIV. 1485.

deed, might eaſily be procured to ſettle the crown on him during life; but Henry knew how much ſuperior the claim of ſucceſſion by blood was to the authority of an aſſembly [x], which had always been overborne by violence in the ſhock of contending titles, and which had ever been more governed by the conjunctures of the times, than by any conſideration derived from reaſon or public intereſt.

THERE was yet a third foundation on which Henry might reſt his claim, the right of conqueſt, by his victory over Richard, the preſent poſſeſſor of the crown. But beſides that Richard himſelf was deemed no better than an uſurper, the army which fought againſt him conſiſted chiefly of Engliſhmen; and a right of conqueſt over England could never be eſtabliſhed by ſuch a victory. Nothing alſo would give greater umbrage to the nation than a claim of this nature; which might be conſtrued as an abolition of all their rights and privileges, and the eſtabliſhment of abſolute authority in the ſovereign [y]. William himſelf, the Norman, though at the head of a powerful and victorious army of foreigners, had at firſt declined the invidious title of conqueror; and it was not till the full eſtabliſhment of his authority that he had ventured to advance ſo violent and deſtructive a pretenſion.

BUT Henry was ſenſible that there remained another foundation of power ſomewhat reſembling the right of conqueſt, namely, preſent poſſeſſion; and that this title, guarded by vigour and abilities, would be ſufficient to ſecure perpetual poſſeſſion of the throne. He had before him the example of Henry IV. who, ſupported by no better pretenſion, had ſubdued many inſurrections, and had been able to tranſmit the crown peaceably to his poſterity. He could perceive that this claim, which had been perpetuated through three generations of the family of

[x] Bacon in Kennet's complete Hiſtory, p. 579. [y] Bacon, p. 579.

Lancaſter,

Lancaſter, might ſtill have ſubſiſted, notwithſtanding the preferable title of the houſe of York, had not the ſceptre devolved into the hands of Henry VI. which were too feeble to ſuſtain it. Inſtructed by this recent experience, Henry was determined to put himſelf in poſſeſſion of regal authority; and to ſhow all opponents that nothing but force of arms, and a ſucceſsful war, ſhould be able to expel him. His claim as heir to the houſe of Lancaſter he was reſolved to advance; and never allowed to be diſcuſſed: And he hoped that this right, favoured by the partiſans of that family, and ſeconded by preſent power, would ſecure him a perpetual and an independent authority. CHAP. XXIV. 1485.

THESE views of Henry are not expoſed to much blame; becauſe founded on good policy, and even on a ſpecies of neceſſity: But there entered into all his meaſures and counſels another motive, which admits not of the ſame apology. The violent contentions which, during ſo long a period, had been maintained between the rival families, and the many ſanguinary revenges which they had alternately taken on each other, had inflamed the oppoſite factions to a high pitch of animoſity. Henry himſelf, who had ſeen moſt of his near friends and relations periſh in battle or by the executioner, and who had been expoſed, in his own perſon, to many hardſhips and dangers, had imbibed a violent antipathy to the York party, which no time or experience were ever able to efface. Inſtead of embracing the preſent happy opportunity of aboliſhing theſe fatal diſtinctions, of uniting his title with that of his conſort, and of beſtowing favour indiſcriminately on the friends of both families; he carried to the throne all the partialities which belong to the head of a faction, and even the paſſions which are carefully guarded againſt by every true politician in that ſituation. To exalt the Lancaſtrian party, to depreſs the adherents of the houſe of York, were ſtill the favourite King's prejudice againſt the houſe of York.

CHAP. XXIV. 1485.

vourite objects of his purſuit; and through the whole courſe of his reign, he never forgot theſe early prepoſſeſſions. Incapable, from his natural temper, of a more enlarged and more benevolent ſyſtem of policy, he expoſed himſelf to many preſent inconveniencies, by too anxiouſly guarding againſt that future poſſible event, which might diſjoin his title from that of the princeſs whom he eſpouſed. And while he treated the Yorkiſts as enemies, he ſoon rendered them ſuch, and taught them to diſcuſs that right to the crown, which he ſo carefully kept ſeparate; and to perceive its weakneſs and invalidity.

To theſe paſſions of Henry, as well as to his ſuſpicious politics, we are to aſcribe the meaſures which he embraced two days after the battle of Boſworth. Edward Plantagenet earl of Warwic, ſon of the duke of Clarence, was detained in a kind of confinement at Sherif-Hutton in Yorkſhire, by the jealouſy of his uncle Richard; whoſe title to the throne was inferior to that of the young prince. Warwic had now reaſon to expect better treatment, as he was no obſtacle to the ſucceſſion either of Henry or Elizabeth; and from a youth of ſuch tender years no danger could reaſonably be apprehended. But ſir Robert Willoughby was diſpatched by Henry, with orders to take him from Sherif-Hutton, to convey him to the Tower, and to detain him in cloſe cuſtody[z]. The ſame meſſenger carried directions that the princeſs Elizabeth, who had been confined to the ſame place, ſhould be conducted to London, in order to meet Henry, and there celebrate her nuptials.

HENRY himſelf ſet out for the capital, and advanced by ſlow journies. Not to rouſe the jealouſy of the people, he took care to avoid all appearance of military triumph; and ſo to reſtrain the inſolence of victory, that every thing about him bore the appearance of an eſtabliſhed monarch, making a peace-

[z] Bacon, p. 579. Polydore Virgil, p. 565.

able

able progress through his dominions, rather than of a prince who had opened his way to the throne by force of arms. The acclamations of the people were every where loud, and no less sincere and hearty. Besides that a young and victorious prince, on his accession, was naturally the object of popularity; the nation promised themselves great felicity from the new scene which opened before them. During the course of near a whole century the kingdom had been laid waste by domestic wars and convulsions; and if at any time the noise of arms had ceased, the sound of faction and discontent still threatened new disorders. Henry, by his marriage with Elizabeth, seemed to ensure a union of the contending titles of the two families; and having prevailed over a hated tyrant, who had anew disjointed the succession even of the house of York, and had filled his own family with blood and murder, he was every where attended with the unfeigned favour of the people. Numerous and splendid troops of gentry and nobility accompanied his progress. The mayor and companies of London received him as he approached the city: The crowds of people and citizens were zealous in their expressions of satisfaction. But Henry, amidst this general effusion of joy, discovered still the stateliness and reserve of his temper, which made him scorn to court popularity: He entered London in a close chariot, and would not gratify the people with a sight of their new sovereign. CHAP. XXIV. 1485. His joyful reception in London.

But the king did not so much neglect the favour of the people as to delay giving them assurances of his marriage with the princess Elizabeth, which he knew to be so passionately desired by the nation. On his leaving Britanny, he had artfully dropped some hints, that if he should succeed in his enterprise, and obtain the crown of England, he would espouse Anne, the heir of that dutchy; and the report of this engagement had already reached England, and had begotten anxiety in the people, and

CHAP. XXIV. 1485.

even in Elizabeth herſelf. Henry took care to diſſipate theſe apprehenſions, by ſolemnly renewing, before the council and principal nobility, the promiſe which he had already given to celebrate his nuptials with the Engliſh princeſs. But though bound by honour, as well as by intereſt, to complete this alliance, he was reſolved to poſtpone it till the ceremony of his own coronation ſhould be finiſhed, and till his title ſhould be recogniſed by parliament. Still anxious to ſupport his perſonal and hereditary right to the throne, he dreaded leſt a preceding marriage with the princeſs ſhould imply a participation of ſovereignty in her, and raiſe doubts of his own title by the houſe of Lancaſter.

His coronation.

Sweating ſickneſs.

THERE raged at that time in London, and other parts of the kingdom, a ſpecies of malady unknown to any other age or nation, the ſweating ſickneſs, which occaſioned the ſudden death of great multitudes; though it ſeemed not to be propagated by any contagious infection, but aroſe from the general diſpoſition of the air and of the human body. In leſs than twenty-four hours the patient commonly died or recovered; but when the peſtilence had exerted its fury for a few weeks, it was obſerved, either from alterations in the air, or from a more proper regimen which had been diſcovered, to be conſiderably abated [a]. Preparations were then made for the ceremony of Henry's coronation. In order to heighten the ſplendour of that ſpectacle, he beſtowed the rank of knight banneret on twelve perſons; and he conferred peerages on three. Jaſper earl of Pembroke, his uncle, was created duke of Bedford; Thomas lord Stanley, his father-in-law, earl of Derby; and Edward Courteney earl of Devonſhire. At the coronation likewiſe there appeared a new inſtitution, which the king had eſtabliſhed for ſecurity as well as pomp, a band of fifty archers,

30th Oct.

[a] Polydore Virgil, p. 567.

who

who were termed yeomen of the guard. But leſt the people ſhould take umbrage at this unuſual ſymptom of jealouſy in the prince, as if it implied a perſonal diffidence of his ſubjects, he declared the inſtitution to be perpetual. The ceremony of coronation was performed by cardinal Bouchier archbiſhop of Canterbury. CHAP. XXIV. 1485.

THE parliament being aſſembled at Weſtminſter, the majority immediately appeared to be devoted partiſans of Henry; all perſons of another diſpoſition either declining to ſtand in thoſe dangerous times, or being obliged to diſſemble their principles and inclinations. The Lancaſtrian party had every where been ſucceſsful in the elections; and even many had been returned, who during the prevalence of the houſe of York had been expoſed to the rigour of law, and had been condemned by ſentence of attainder and outlawry. Their right to take ſeats in the houſe being queſtioned, the caſe was referred to all the judges, who aſſembled in the exchequer chamber, in order to deliberate on ſo delicate a ſubject. The opinion delivered was prudent, and contained a juſt temperament between law and expediency [b]. The judges determined, that the members attainted ſhould forbear taking their ſeat till an act were paſſed for the reverſal of their attainder. There was no difficulty in obtaining this act; and in it were comprehended a hundred and ſeven perſons of the king's party [c]. 7th Nov. A parliament.

BUT a ſcruple was ſtarted of a nature ſtill more important. The king himſelf had been attainted; and his right of ſucceſſion to the crown might thence be expoſed to ſome doubt. The judges extricated themſelves from this dangerous queſtion, by aſſerting it as a maxim; "That the crown takes away all "defects and ſtops in blood; and that from the

[b] Bacon, p. 581.

[c] Rot. Parl. 1 Hen. VII. n. 2, 3, 4—15. 17. 26—65.

CHAP. XXIV. 1485.

"time the king assumed royal authority, the fountain was cleared, and all attainders and corruptions of blood discharged[d]." Besides that the case, from its urgent necessity, admitted of no deliberation; the judges probably thought, that no sentence of a court of judicature had authority sufficient to bar the right of succession; that the heir of the crown was commonly exposed to such jealousy as might often occasion stretches of law and justice against him; and that a prince might even be engaged in unjustifiable measures during his predecessor's reign, without meriting on that account to be excluded from the throne, which was his birth-right.

With a parliament so obsequious, the king could not fail of obtaining whatever act of settlement he was pleased to require. He seems only to have entertained some doubt within himself on what claim he should found his pretensions. In his speech to the parliament he mentioned his just title by hereditary right: But lest that title should not be esteemed sufficient, he subjoined his claim by the judgment of God, who had given him victory over his enemies. And again, lest this pretension should be interpreted as assuming a right of conquest, he ensured to his subjects the full enjoyment of their former properties and possessions.

Entail of the crown.

The entail of the crown was drawn according to the sense of the king, and probably in words dictated by him. He made no mention in it of the princess Elizabeth, nor of any branch of her family; but in other respects the act was compiled with sufficient reserve and moderation. He did not insist that it should contain a declaration or recognition of his preceding right; as on the other hand he avoided the appearance of a new law or ordinance. He chose a middle course, which, as is generally un-

[d] Bacon, p. 581.

avoid-

avoidable in such cases, was not entirely free from uncertainty and obscurity. It was voted, "That "the inheritance of the crown should rest, remain, "and abide in the king[e];" but whether as rightful heir, or only as present possessor, was not determined. In like manner, Henry was contented that the succession should be secured to the heirs of his body; but he pretended not, in case of their failure, to exclude the house of York, or give the preference to that of Lancaster: He left that great point ambiguous for the present, and trusted that, if it should ever become requisite to determine it, future incidents would open the way for the decision. CHAP. XXIV. 1485.

But even after all these precautions, the king was so little satisfied with his own title, that in the following year he applied to papal authority for a confirmation of it; and as the court of Rome gladly laid hold of all opportunities which the imprudence, weakness, or necessities of princes afforded it to extend its influence, Innocent VIII. the reigning pope, readily granted a bull in whatever terms the king was pleased to desire. All Henry's titles, by succession, marriage, parliamentary choice, even conquest, are there enumerated; and to the whole the sanction of religion is added; excommunication is denounced against every one who should either disturb him in the present possession, or the heirs of his body in the future succession of the crown; and from this penalty no criminal, except in the article of death, could be absolved but by the pope himself, or his special commissioners. It is difficult to imagine that the security derived from this bull could be a compensation for the defect which it betrayed in Henry's title, and for the danger of thus inviting the pope to interpose in these concerns.

[e] Bacon, p. 581.

It

CHAP. XXIV. 1485.

It was natural, and even laudable in Henry to reverſe the attainders which had paſſed againſt the partiſans of the houſe of Lancaſter: But the revenges which he exerciſed againſt the adherents of the York family, to which he was ſo ſoon to be allied, cannot be conſidered in the ſame light. Yet the parliament, at his inſtigation, paſſed an act of attainder againſt the late king himſelf, againſt the duke of Norfolk, the earl of Surrey, viſcount Lovel, the lords Zouche and Ferrars of Chartley, ſir Walter and ſir James Harrington, ſir William Berkeley, ſir Humphrey Stafford, Cateſby, and about twenty other gentlemen, who had fought on Richard's ſide in the battle of Boſworth. How men could be guilty of treaſon, by ſupporting the king in poſſeſſion againſt the earl of Richmond, who aſſumed not the title of king, it is not eaſy to conceive; and nothing but a ſervile complaiſance in the parliament could have engaged them to make this ſtretch of juſtice. Nor was it a ſmall mortification to the people in general, to find that the king, prompted either by avarice or reſentment, could in the very beginning of his reign ſo far violate the cordial union which had previouſly been concerted between the parties, and to the expectation of which he had plainly owed his ſucceſſion to the throne.

The king, having gained ſo many points of conſequence from the parliament, thought it not expedient to demand any ſupply from them, which the profound peace enjoyed by the nation, and the late forfeiture of Richard's adherents, ſeemed to render ſomewhat ſuperfluous. The parliament, however, conferred on him during life the duty of tonnage and poundage, which had been enjoyed in the ſame manner by ſome of his immediate predeceſſors; and they added, before they broke up, other money bills of no great moment. The king, on his part, made returns of grace and favour to his people. He

10th Dec.

publiſhed

published his royal proclamation, offering pardon to all such as had taken arms, or formed any attempts against him; provided they submitted themselves to mercy by a certain day, and took the usual oath of fealty and allegiance. Upon this proclamation many came out of their sanctuaries; and the minds of men were every where much quieted. Henry chose to take wholly to himself the merit of an act of grace, so agreeable to the nation; rather than communicate it with the parliament (as was his first intention), by passing a bill to that purpose. The earl of Surrey, however, though he had submitted, and delivered himself into the king's hands, was sent prisoner to the Tower. CHAP. XXIV. 1485.

During this parliament the king also bestowed favours and honours on some particular persons who were attached to him. Edward Stafford, eldest son of the duke of Buckingham, attainted in the late reign, was restored to the honours of his family, as well as to its fortune, which was very ample. This generosity, so unusual in Henry, was the effect of his gratitude to the memory of Buckingham, who had first concerted the plan of his elevation, and who by his own ruin had made way for that great event. Chandos of Britanny was created earl of Bath, sir Giles Daubeny lord Daubeny, and sir Robert Willoughby lord Broke. These were all the titles of nobility conferred by the king during this session of parliament[f].

But the ministers whom Henry most trusted and favoured were not chosen from among the nobility, or even from among the laity. John Morton and Richard Fox, two clergymen, persons of industry, vigilance, and capacity, were the men to whom he chiefly confided his affairs and secret counsels. They had shared with him all his former dangers and dif-

[f] Polydore Virgil, p. 566.

tresses;

CHAP. XXIV.

1485. treſſes; and he now took care to make them participate in his good fortune. They were both called to the privy council; Moreton was reſtored to the biſhopric of Ely, Fox was created biſhop of Exeter. The former ſoon after, upon the death of Bouchier, was raiſed to the ſee of Canterbury. The latter was made privy ſeal; and ſucceſſively biſhop of Bath and Wells, Durham and Wincheſter. For Henry, as lord Bacon obſerves, loved to employ and advance prelates; becauſe, having rich biſhopries to beſtow, it was eaſy for him to reward their ſervices: And it was his maxim to raiſe them by ſlow ſteps, and make them firſt paſs through the inferior ſees[g]. He probably expected, that as they were naturally more dependant on him than the nobility, who during that age enjoyed poſſeſſions and juriſdictions dangerous to royal authority; ſo the proſpect of farther elevation would render them ſtill more active in his ſervice, and more obſequious to his commands.

1486. 18th Jan. In preſenting the bill of tonnage and poundage, the parliament, anxious to preſerve the legal undiſputed ſucceſſion to the crown, had petitioned Henry, with demonſtrations of the greateſt zeal, to eſpouſe the princeſs Elizabeth; but they covered their true reaſon under the dutiful pretence of their deſire to have heirs of his body. He now thought in earneſt of ſatisfying the minds of his people in that particular. His marriage was celebrated at London, and that with greater appearance of univerſal joy than either his firſt entry or his coronation. Henry remarked with much diſpleaſure this general favour borne to the houſe of York. The ſuſpicions which aroſe from it not only diſturbed his tranquillity during his whole reign; but bred diſguſt towards his conſort herſelf, and poiſoned all his domeſtic enjoyments. Though

King's marriage.

[g] Bacon, p. 582.

virtuous,

virtuous, amiable, and obſequious to the laſt degree, ſhe never met with a proper return of affection, or even of complaiſance from her huſband; and the malignant ideas of faction ſtill, in his ſullen mind, prevailed over all the ſentiments of conjugal tenderneſs. CHAP. XXIV. 1486.

THE king had been carried along with ſuch a tide of ſucceſs ever ſince his arrival in England, that he thought nothing could withſtand the fortune and authority which attended him. He now reſolved to make a progreſs into the North, where the friends of the houſe of York, and even the partiſans of Richard, were numerous; in hopes of curing, by his preſence and converſation, the prejudices of the malcontents. When he arrived at Nottingham he heard that viſcount Lovel, with ſir Humfrey Stafford, and Thomas his brother, had ſecretly withdrawn themſelves from their ſanctuary at Colcheſter: But this news appeared not to him of ſuch importance as to ſtop his journey; and he proceeded forward to York. He there heard that the Staffords had levied any army, and were marching to beſiege the city of Worceſter: And that Lovel, at the head of three or four thouſand men, was approaching to attack him in York. Henry was not diſmayed with this intelligence. His active courage, full of reſources, immediately prompted him to find the proper remedy. Though ſurrounded with enemies in theſe diſaffected counties, he aſſembled a ſmall body of troops in whom he could confide; and he put them under the command of the duke of Bedford. He joined to them all his own attendants; but he found that this haſty armament was more formidable by their ſpirit and their zealous attachment to him, than by the arms or military ſtores with which they were provided. He therefore gave Bedford orders not to approach the enemy; but previouſly to try every proper expedient to diſperſe them. Bedford publiſhed a general promiſe of pardon to the rebels; An inſurrection.

CHAP. XXIV. 1486.

which had a greater effect on their leader than on his followers. Lovel, who had undertaken an enterprise that exceeded his courage and capacity, was so terrified with the fear of desertion among his troops, that he suddenly withdrew himself; and after lurking some time in Lancashire, he made his escape into Flanders, where he was protected by the dutchess of Burgundy. His army submitted to the king's clemency; and the other rebels, hearing of this success, raised the siege of Worcester, and dispersed themselves. The Staffords took sanctuary in the church of Colnham, a village near Abingdon; but as it was found that this church had not the privilege of giving protection to rebels, they were taken thence: The elder was executed at Tyburn; the younger, pleading that he had been misled by his brother, obtained a pardon [a].

26th Sept.

HENRY's joy for this success was followed, some time after, by the birth of a prince, to whom he gave the name of Arthur, in memory of the famous British king of that name, from whom it was pretended the family of Tudor derived its descent.

Discontents of the people.

THOUGH Henry had been able to defeat this hasty rebellion, raised by the relics of Richard's partisans, his government was become in general unpopular: The source of public discontent arose chiefly from his prejudices against the house of York, which was generally beloved by the nation, and which for that very reason became every day more the object of his hatred and jealousy. Not only a preference on all occasions, it was observed, was given to the Lancastrians; but many of the opposite party had been exposed to great severity, and had been bereaved of their fortunes by acts of attainder. A general resumption likewise had passed of all grants made by the princes of the house of York; and though this rigour had been covered under the pretence that

[a] Polydore Virgil, p. 569.

the

the revenue was become insufficient to support the dignity of the crown, and though the grants, during the later years of Henry VI. were resumed by the same law, yet the York party, as they were the principal sufferers by the resumption, thought it chiefly levelled against them. The severity exercised against the earl of Warwic begat compassion for youth and innocence exposed to such oppression; and his confinement in the Tower, the very place where Edward's children had been murdered by their uncle, made the public expect a like catastrophe for him, and led them to make a comparison between Henry and that detested tyrant. And when it was remarked that the queen herself met with harsh treatment, and even after the birth of a son was not admitted to the honour of a public coronation, Henry's prepossessions were then concluded to be inveterate, and men became equally obstinate in their disgust to his government. Nor was the manner and address of the king calculated to cure these prejudices contracted against his administration; but had in every thing a tendency to promote fear, or at best reverence, rather than goodwill and affection[h]. While the high idea entertained of his policy and vigour retained the nobility and men of character in obedience; the effects of his unpopular government soon appeared, by incidents of an extraordinary nature.

CHAP. XXIV. 1486.

THERE lived in Oxford one Richard Simon, a priest, who possessed some subtlety, and still more enterprise and temerity. This man had entertained the design of disturbing Henry's government, by raising a pretender to his crown; and for that purpose he cast his eyes on Lambert Simnel, a youth of fifteen years of age, who was son of a baker, and who, being endowed with understanding above his years, and address above his condition, seemed well

Lambert Simnel.

[h] Bacon, p. 583.

CHAP. XXIV. 1486.

fitted to perſonate a prince of royal extraction. A report had been ſpread among the people, and received with great avidity, that Richard duke of York, ſecond ſon of Edward IV. had, by a ſecret eſcape, ſaved himſelf from the cruelty of his uncle, and lay ſomewhere concealed in England. Simon, taking advantage of this rumour, had at firſt inſtructed his pupil to aſſume that name, which he found to be ſo fondly cheriſhed by the public: But hearing afterwards a new report, that Warwic had made his eſcape from the Tower, and obſerving that this news was attended with no leſs general ſatisfaction, he changed the plan of his impoſture, and made Simnel perſonate that unfortunate prince[1]. Though the youth was qualified by nature for the part which he was inſtructed to act; yet was it remarked, that he was better informed in circumſtances relating to the royal family, particularly in the adventures of the earl of Warwic, than he could be ſuppoſed to have learned from one of Simon's condition: And it was thence conjectured, that perſons of higher rank, partiſans of the houſe of York, had laid the plan of this conſpiracy, and had conveyed proper inſtructions to the actors. The queen-dowager herſelf was expoſed to ſuſpicion; and it was indeed the general opinion, however unlikely it might ſeem, that ſhe had ſecretly given her conſent to the impoſture. This woman was of a very reſtleſs diſpoſition. Finding that, inſtead of receiving the reward of her ſervices in contributing to Henry's elevation, ſhe herſelf was fallen into abſolute inſignificance, her daughter treated with ſeverity, and all her friends brought under ſubjection, ſhe had conceived the moſt violent animoſity againſt him, and had reſolved to make him feel the effects of her reſentment. She knew that the impoſtor, however ſucceſsful, might eaſily at

[1] Polydore Virgil, p. 569, 570.

laſt

last be set aside; and if a way could be found at his risque to subvert the government, she hoped that a scene might be opened which, though difficult at present exactly to foresee, would gratify her revenge, and be on the whole less irksome to her than that slavery and contempt to which she was now reduced [k]. CHAP. XXIV. 1485.

But whatever care Simon might take to convey instruction to his pupil Simnel, he was sensible that the imposture would not bear a close inspection; and he was therefore determined to open the first public scene of it in Ireland. That island, which was zealously attached to the house of York, and bore an affectionate regard to the memory of Clarence, Warwic's father, who had been their lieutenant, was improvidently allowed by Henry to remain in the same condition in which he found it; and all the counsellors and officers who had been appointed by his predecessors still retained their authority. No sooner did Simnel present himself to Thomas Fitz-gerald, earl of Kildare, the deputy, and claim his protection as the unfortunate Warwic, than that credulous nobleman, not suspecting so bold an imposture, gave attention to him, and began to consult some persons of rank with regard to this extraordinary incident. These he found even more sanguine in their zeal and belief than himself: And in proportion as the story diffused itself among those of lower condition, it became the object of still greater passion and credulity, till the people in Dublin with one consent tendered their allegiance to Simnel, as to the true Plantagenet. Fond of a novelty, which flattered their natural propension, they overlooked the daughters of Edward IV. who stood before Warwic in the order of succession; they payed the pretended prince attendance as their sovereign, lodged him in the castle of Dublin, crowned him Revolt of Ireland.

[k] Polydore Virgil, p. 570.

CHAP. XXIV. 1486.

with a diadem taken from a ſtatue of the Virgin, and publicly proclaimed him king, by the appellation of Edward VI. The whole iſland followed the example of the capital; and not a ſword was any where drawn in Henry's quarrel.

When this intelligence was conveyed to the king, it reduced him to ſome perplexity. Determined always to face his enemies in perſon, he yet ſcrupled at preſent to leave England, where he ſuſpected the conſpiracy was firſt framed, and where he knew many perſons of condition, and the people in general, were much diſpoſed to give it countenance. In order to diſcover the ſecret ſource of the contrivance, and take meaſures againſt this open revolt, he held frequent conſultations with his miniſters and counſellors, and laid plans for a vigorous defence of his authority, and the ſuppreſſion of his enemies.

The firſt event which followed theſe deliberations gave ſurpriſe to the public: It was the ſeizure of the queen-dowager, the forfeiture of all her lands and revenue, and the cloſe confinement of her perſon in the nunnery of Bermondſey. This act of authority was covered with a very thin pretence. It was alledged that, notwithſtanding the ſecret agreement to marry her daughter to Henry, ſhe had yet yielded to the ſolicitations and menaces of Richard, and had delivered that princeſs and her ſiſters into the hands of the tyrant. This crime, which was now become obſolete, and might admit of alleviations, was therefore ſuſpected not to be the real cauſe of the ſeverity with which ſhe was treated; and men believed that the king, unwilling to accuſe ſo near a relation of a conſpiracy againſt him, had cloaked his vengeance or precaution under colour of an offence known to the whole world [1]. They were afterwards the more confirmed in this ſuſpicion, when they found that the unfortunate queen, though ſhe ſurvived this diſ-

[1] Bacon, p. 583. Polydore Virgil, p. 571.

grace

grace ſeveral years, was never treated with any more lenity, but was allowed to end her life in poverty, ſolitude, and confinement. CHAP. XXIV. 1486.

THE next meaſure of the king's was of a leſs exceptionable nature. He ordered that Warwic ſhould be taken from the Tower, be led in proceſſion through the ſtreets of London, be conducted to St. Paul's, and there expoſed to the view of the whole people. He even gave directions that ſome men of rank, attached to the houſe of York, and beſt acquainted with the perſon of this prince, ſhould approach him, and converſe with him: And he truſted that theſe, being convinced of the abſurd impoſture of Simnel, would put a ſtop to the credulity of the populace. The expedient had its effect in England: But in Ireland the people ſtill perſiſted in their revolt, and zealouſly retorted on the king the reproach of propagating an impoſture, and of having ſhewn a counterfeit Warwic to the public.

HENRY had ſoon reaſon to apprehend that the deſign againſt him was not laid on ſuch ſlight foundations as the abſurdity of the contrivance ſeemed to indicate. John earl of Lincoln, ſon of John de la Pole, duke of Suffolk, and of Elizabeth, eldeſt ſiſter to Edward IV. was engaged to take part in the conſpiracy. This nobleman, who poſſeſſed capacity and courage, had entertained very aſpiring views; and his ambition was encouraged by the known intentions of his uncle Richard, who had formed a deſign, in caſe he himſelf ſhould die without iſſue, of declaring Lincoln ſucceſſor to the crown. The king's jealouſy againſt all eminent perſons of the York party, and his rigour towards Warwic, had farther ſtruck Lincoln with apprehenſions, and made him reſolve to ſeek for ſafety in the moſt dangerous counſels. Having fixed a ſecret correſpondence with ſir Thomas Broughton, a man of great intereſt in Lancaſhire, he retired to Flan-

CHAP. XXIV.

ders, where Lovel had arrived a little before him; and he lived during some time in the court of his aunt the dutchess of Burgundy, by whom he had been invited over.

1486.

Intrigues of the dutchess of Burgundy.

MARGARET, widow of Charles the Bold, duke of Burgundy, not having any children of her own, attached herself, with an entire friendship, to her daughter-in-law, married to Maximilian archduke of Austria; and after the death of that princess, she persevered in her affection to Philip and Margaret her children, and occupied herself in the care of their education and of their persons. By her virtuous conduct and demeanour she had acquired great authority among the Flemings; and lived with much dignity, as well as œconomy, upon that ample dowry which she inherited from her husband. The resentments of this princess were no less warm than her friendships; and that spirit of faction, which it is so difficult for a social and sanguine temper to guard against, had taken strong possession of her heart, and entrenched somewhat on the probity which shone forth in the other parts of her character. Hearing of the malignant jealousy entertained by Henry against her family, and his oppression of all its partisans, she was moved with the highest indignation, and she determined to make him repent of that enmity to which so many of her friends, without any reason or necessity, had fallen victims.

1487. After consulting with Lincoln and Lovel, she hired a body of two thousand veteran Germans, under the command of Martin Swart, a brave and experienced officer[m]; and sent them over, together with these two noblemen, to join Simnel in Ireland.

Lambert Simnel invades England.

The countenance given by persons of such high rank, and the accession of this military force, much raised the courage of the Irish, and made them entertain the resolution of invading Eng-

[m] Polyd. Virg. p. 572, 573.

land,

land, where they believed the ſpirit of diſaffection as prevalent as it appeared to be in Ireland. The poverty alſo under which they laboured made it impoſſible for them to ſupport any longer their new court and army, and inſpired them with a ſtrong deſire of enriching themſelves by plunder and preferment in England. CHAP. XXIV. 1487.

HENRY was not ignorant of theſe intentions of his enemies; and he prepared himſelf for defence. He ordered troops to be levied in different parts of the kingdom, and put them under the command of the duke of Bedford and earl of Oxford. He confined the marquis of Dorſet, who he ſuſpected would reſent the injuries ſuffered by his mother the queen-dowager: And, to gratify the people by an appearance of devotion, he made a pilgrimage to our lady of Walſingham, famous for miracles; and there offered up prayers for ſucceſs, and for deliverance from his enemies.

BEING informed that Simnel was landed at Foudrey in Lancaſhire, he drew together his forces, and advanced towards the enemy as far as Coventry. The rebels had entertained hopes that the diſaffected counties in the North would riſe in their favour: But the people in general, averſe to join Iriſh and German invaders, convinced of Lambert's impoſture, and kept in awe by the king's reputation for ſucceſs and conduct, either remained in tranquillity, or gave aſſiſtance to the royal army. The earl of Lincoln, therefore, who commanded the rebels, finding no hopes but in victory, was determined to bring the matter to a ſpeedy deciſion; and the king, ſupported by the native courage of his temper, and emboldened by a great acceſſion of volunteers, who had joined him under the earl of Shrewſbury and lord Strange, declined not the combat. The hoſtile armies met at Stoke, in the county of Nottingham, and fought a battle, which was bloody, and more obſtinately diſputed than could have been expected from

6th June. Battle of Stoke.

CHAP. XXIV. 1487.

from the inequality of their force. All the leaders of the rebels were resolved to conquer or to perish; and they inspired their troops with like resolution. The Germans also, being veteran and experienced soldiers, kept the event long doubtful; and even the Irish, though ill-armed and almost defenceless, showed themselves not defective in spirit and bravery. The king's victory was purchased with loss, but was entirely decisive. Lincoln, Broughton, and Swart, perished in the field of battle, with four thousand of their followers. As Lovel was never more heard of, he was believed to have undergone the same fate. Simnel, with his tutor Simon, was taken prisoner. Simon, being a priest, was not tried at law, and was only committed to close custody: Simnel was too contemptible to be an object either of apprehension or resentment to Henry. He was pardoned, and made a scullion in the king's kitchen; whence he was afterwards advanced to the rank of a falconer [n].

Henry had now leisure to revenge himself on his enemies. He made a progress into the nothern parts, where he gave many proofs of his rigorous disposition. A strict enquiry was made after those who had assisted or favoured the rebels. The punishments were not all sanguinary: The king made his revenge subservient to his avarice. Heavy fines were levied upon the delinquents. The proceedings of the courts, and even the courts themselves, were arbitrary. Either the criminals were tried by commissioners appointed for the purpose, or they suffered punishment by a sentence of a court-martial. And, as a rumour had prevailed before the battle of Stoke, that the rebels had gained the victory, that the royal army was cut in pieces, and that the king himself had escaped by flight, Henry was resolved to interpret the belief

[n] Bacon, p. 586. Polyd. Virg. p. 574.

or

or propagation of this report as a mark of disaffection; and he punished many for that pretended crime. But such in this age was the situation of the English government, that the royal prerogative, which was but imperfectly restrained during the most peaceable periods, was sure, in tumultuous or even suspicious times, which frequently recurred, to break all bounds of law, and to violate public liberty. CHAP. XXIV. 1487.

After the king had gratified his rigour by the punishment of his enemies, he determined to give contentment to the people in a point which, though a mere ceremony, was passionately desired by them. The queen had been married near two years, but had not yet been crowned; and this affectation of delay had given great discontent to the public, and had been one principal source of the disaffection which prevailed. The king, instructed by experience, now finished the ceremony of her coronation; and, to shew a disposition still more gracious, he restored to liberty the marquis of Dorset, who had been able to clear himself of all the suspicions entertained against him. 25th Nov.

CHAP. XXV.

State of foreign affairs——State of Scotland—of Spain—of the Low Countries—of France—of Britanny——French invaſion of Britanny——French embaſſy to England——Diſſimulation of the French court——An inſurrection in the North—ſuppreſſed——King ſends forces into Britanny——Annexation of Britanny to France——A parliament——War with France——Invaſion of France——Peace with France——Perkin Warbec——His impoſture——He is avowed by the dutcheſs of Burgundy—and by many of the Engliſh nobility——Trial and execution of Stanley——A parliament.

CHAP. XXV.

1488.

THE king acquired great reputation throughout Europe by the vigorous and proſperous conduct of his domeſtic affairs: But as ſome incidents about this time invited him to look abroad, and exert himſelf in behalf of his allies, it will be neceſſary, in order to give a juſt account of his foreign meaſures, to explain the ſituation of the neighbouring kingdoms; beginning with Scotland, which lies moſt contiguous.

State of foreign affairs.

State of Scotland.

THE kingdom of Scotland had not yet attained that ſtate which diſtinguiſhes a civilized monarchy, and which enables the government, by the force of its laws and inſtitutions alone, without any extraordinary capacity in the ſovereign, to maintain itſelf in order and tranquillity. James III. who now filled

filled the throne, was a prince of little induſtry and of a narrow genius; and though it behoved him to yield the reins of government to his miniſters, he had never been able to make any choice which could give contentment both to himſelf and to his people. When he beſtowed his confidence on any of the principal nobility, he found that they exalted their own family to ſuch a height as was dangerous to the prince, and gave umbrage to the ſtate: When he conferred favour on any perſon of meaner birth, on whoſe ſubmiſſion he could more depend, the barons of his kingdom, enraged at the power of an upſtart minion, proceeded to the utmoſt extremities againſt their ſovereign. Had Henry entertained the ambition of conqueſts, a tempting opportunity now offered of reducing that kingdom to ſubjection; but as he was probably ſenſible that a warlike people, though they might be over-run by reaſon of their domeſtic diviſions, could not be retained in obedience without a regular military force, which was then unknown in England, he rather intended the renewal of the peace with Scotland, and ſent an embaſſy to James for that purpoſe. But the Scots, who never deſired a durable peace with England, and who deemed their ſecurity to conſiſt in conſtantly preſerving themſelves in a warlike poſture, would not agree to more than a ſeven years truce, which was accordingly concluded [o].

CHAP. XXV. 1488.

The European ſtates on the continent were then haſtening faſt to the ſituation in which they have remained, without any material alteration, for near three centuries; and began to unite themſelves into one extenſive ſyſtem of policy, which comprehended the chief powers of Chriſtendom. Spain, which had hitherto been almoſt entirely occupied within herſelf, now became formidable by the union of Arragon and Caſtile in the perſons of Ferdinand and Iſabella,

State of Spain.

[o] Polyd. Virg. p. 575.

CHAP. XXV. 1488.

Isabella, who being princes of great capacity, employed their force in enterprises the most advantageous to their combined monarchy. The conquest of Granada from the Moors was then undertaken, and brought near to a happy conclusion. And in that expedition the military genius of Spain was revived; honour and security were attained; and her princes, no longer kept in awe by a domestic enemy so dangerous, began to enter into all the transactions of Europe, and make a great figure in every war and negotiation.

Of the Low Countries.

MAXIMILIAN king of the Romans, son of the emperor Frederic, had, by his marriage with the heiress of Burgundy, acquired an interest in the Netherlands; and though the death of his consort had weakened his connexions with that country, he still pretended to the government as tutor to his son Philip, and his authority had been acknowledged by Brabant, Holland, and several of the provinces. But as Flanders and Hainault still refused to submit to his regency, and even appointed other tutors to Philip, he had been engaged in long wars against that obstinate people, and never was able thoroughly to subdue their spirit. That he might free himself from the opposition of France, he had concluded a peace with Lewis XI. and had given his daughter Margaret, then an infant, in marriage to the dauphin; together with Artois, Franche-Compté, and Charolois, as her dowry. But this alliance had not produced the desired effect. The dauphin succeeded to the crown of France by the appellation of Charles VIII.; but Maximilian still found the mutinies of the Flemings fomented by the intrigues of the court of France.

State of France.

FRANCE, during the two preceding reigns, had made a mighty increase in power and greatness; and had not other states of Europe at the same time received an accession of force, it had been impossible to have retained her within her ancient boundaries.

Most

Moſt of the great fiefs, Normandy, Champagne, Anjou, Dauphiny, Guienne, Provence, and Burgundy, had been united to the crown; the Engliſh had been expelled from all their conqueſts; the authority of the prince had been raiſed to ſuch a height as enabled him to maintain law and order; a conſiderable military force was kept on foot, and the finances were able to ſupport it. Lewis XI. indeed, from whom many of theſe advantages were derived, was dead, and had left his ſon in early youth and ill educated, to ſuſtain the weight of the monarchy: But having entruſted the government to his daughter Anne, lady of Beaujeu, a woman of ſpirit and capacity, the French power ſuffered no check or decline. On the contrary, this princeſs formed the great project, which at laſt ſhe happily effected, of uniting to the crown Britanny, the laſt and moſt independent fief of the monarchy. CHAP. XXV. 1488.

Of Britanny.

Francis II. duke of Britanny, conſcious of his own incapacity for government, had reſigned himſelf to the direction of Peter Landais, a man of mean birth, more remarkable for abilities than for virtue or integrity. The nobles of Britanny, diſpleaſed with the great advancement of this favourite, had even proceeded to diſaffection againſt their ſovereign; and after many tumults and diſorders, they at laſt united among themſelves, and in a violent manner ſeized, tried, and put to death the obnoxious miniſter. Dreading the reſentment of the prince for this invaſion of his authority, many of them retired to France; others, for protection and ſafety, maintained a ſecret correſpondence with the French miniſtry, who, obſerving the great diſſenſions among the Bretons, thought the opportunity favourable for invading the dutchy; and ſo much the rather, as they could cover their ambition under the ſpecious pretence of providing for domeſtic ſecurity.

CHAP. XXV.

1488. Lewis duke of Orleans, firſt prince of the blood, and preſumptive heir of the monarchy, had diſputed the adminiſtration with the lady of Beaujeu; and though his pretenſions had been rejected by the ſtates, he ſtill maintained cabals with many of the grandees, and laid ſchemes for ſubverting the authority of that princeſs. Finding his conſpiracies detected, he took to arms, and fortified himſelf in Beaugenci; but as his revolt was precipitate, before his confederates were ready to join him, he had been obliged to ſubmit, and to receive ſuch conditions as the French miniſtry were pleaſed to impoſe upon him. Actuated, however, by his ambition, and even by his fears, he ſoon retired out of France, and took ſhelter with the duke of Britanny, who was deſirous of ſtrengthening himſelf againſt the deſigns of the lady of Beaujeu, by the friendſhip and credit of the duke of Orleans. This latter prince alſo, perceiving the aſcendant which he ſoon acquired over the duke of Britanny, had engaged many of his partiſans to join him at that court, and had formed the deſign of aggrandiſing himſelf by a marriage with Anne, the heir of that opulent dutchy.

The barons of Britanny, who ſaw all favour engroſſed by the duke of Orleans and his train, renewed a ſtricter correſpondence with France, and even invited the French king to make an invaſion on their country. Deſirous, however, of preſerving its independency, they had regulated the number of ſuccours which France was to ſend them, and had ſtipulated that no fortified place in Britanny ſhould remain in the poſſeſſion of that monarchy: A vain precaution, where revolted ſubjects treat with a power ſo much ſuperior! The French invaded Britanny with forces three times more numerous than thoſe which they had promiſed to the barons; and advancing into the heart of the country, laid ſiege to Ploermel. To oppoſe them, the duke raiſed a numerous but ill-diſciplined army, which he put

French invaſion of Britanny.

under the command of the duke of Orleans, the count of Dunois, and others of the French nobility. The army, discontented with his choice, and jealous of their confederates, soon disbanded, and left their prince with too small a force to keep the field against his invaders. He retired to Vannes; but being hotly pursued by the French, who had now made themselves masters of Ploermel, he escaped to Nantz; and the enemy, having previously taken and garrisoned Vannes, Dinant, and other places, laid close siege to that city. The barons of Britanny, finding their country menaced with total subjection, began gradually to withdraw from the French army, and to make peace with their sovereign.

CHAP. XXV. 1488.

This desertion, however, of the Bretons discouraged not the court of France from pursuing her favourite project of reducing Britanny to subjection. The situation of Europe appeared favourable to the execution of this design. Maximilian was indeed engaged in close alliance with the duke of Britanny, and had even opened a treaty for marrying his daughter; but he was on all occasions so indigent, and at that time so disquieted by the mutinies of the Flemings, that little effectual assistance could be expected from him. Ferdinand was entirely occupied in the conquest of Grenada; and it was also known, that if France would resign to him Roussillon and Cerdagne, to which he had pretensions, she could at any time engage him to abandon the interest of Britanny. England alone was both enabled by her power, and engaged by her interests, to support the independency of that dutchy; and the most dangerous opposition was therefore, by Anne of Beaujeu, expected from that quarter. In order to cover her real designs, no sooner was she informed of Henry's success against Simnel and his partisans, than she dispatched ambassadors to the court of London, and made professions of the greatest trust and confidence in that monarch.

CHAP. XXV.

1488.

French embaſſy to England.

THE ambaſſadors, after congratulating Henry on his late victory, and communicating to him, in the moſt cordial manner, as to an intimate friend, ſome ſucceſſes of their maſter againſt Maximilian, came in the progreſs of their diſcourſe to mention the late tranſactions in Britanny. They told him, that the duke having given protection to French fugitives and rebels, the king had been neceſſitated, contrary to his intention and inclination, to carry war into that dutchy: That the honour of the crown was intereſted not to ſuffer a vaſſal ſo far to forget his duty to his liege lord; nor was the ſecurity of the government leſs concerned to prevent the conſequences of this dangerous temerity: That the fugitives were no mean or obſcure perſons; but, among others, the duke of Orleans, firſt prince of the blood, who, finding himſelf obnoxious to juſtice for treaſonable practices in France, had fled into Britanny, where he ſtill perſevered in laying ſchemes of rebellion againſt his ſovereign: That the war being thus, on the part of the French monarch, entirely defenſive, it would immediately ceaſe, when the duke of Britanny, by returning to his duty, ſhould remove the cauſes of it: That their maſter was ſenſible of the obligations which the duke in very critical times had conferred on Henry; but it was known alſo, that in times ſtill more critical, he or his mercenary counſellors had deſerted him, and put his life in the utmoſt hazard: That his ſole refuge in theſe deſperate extremities had been the court of France, which not only protected his perſon, but ſupplied him with men and money, with which, aided by his own valour and conduct, he had been enabled to mount the throne of England: That France in this tranſaction had, from friendſhip to Henry, acted contrary to what in a narrow view might be eſteemed her own intereſt; ſince, inſtead of an odious tyrant, ſhe had contributed to eſtabliſh on a rival throne a prince endowed with ſuch virtue

and

and abilities: And that as both the juſtice of the cauſe, and the obligations conferred on Henry, thus preponderated on the ſide of France, ſhe reaſonably expected that, if the ſituation of his affairs did not permit him to give her aſſiſtance, he would at leaſt preſerve a neutrality between the contending parties [p]. CHAP. XXV. 1488.

This diſcourſe of the French ambaſſadors was plauſible; and to give it greater weight, they communicated to Henry, as in confidence, their maſter's intention, after he ſhould have ſettled the differences with Britanny, to lead an army into Italy, and make good his pretenſions to the kingdom of Naples: A project which they knew would give no umbrage to the court of England. But all theſe artifices were in vain employed againſt the penetration of the king. He clearly ſaw that France had entertained the view of ſubduing Britanny; but he alſo perceived, that ſhe would meet with great, and, as he thought, inſuperable difficulties in the execution of her project. The native force of that dutchy, he knew, had always been conſiderable, and had often, without any foreign aſſiſtance, reſiſted the power of France; the natural temper of the French nation, he imagined, would make them eaſily abandon any enterpriſe which required perſeverance; and as the heir of the crown was confederated with the duke of Britanny, the miniſters would be ſtill more remiſs in proſecuting a ſcheme which muſt draw on them his reſentment and diſpleaſure. Should even theſe internal obſtructions be removed, Maximilian, whoſe enmity to France was well known, and who now paid his addreſſes to the heireſs of Britanny, would be able to make a diverſion on the ſide of Flanders; nor could it be expected that France, if ſhe proſecuted ſuch ambitious projects, would be allowed to remain in tranquillity by Ferdinand and

[p] Bacon, p. 589.

CHAP. XXV. 1488.

Isabella. Above all, he thought the French court could never expect that England, so deeply interested to preserve the independency of Britanny, so able by her power and situation to give effectual and prompt assistance, would permit such an accession of force to her rival. He imagined, therefore, that the ministers of France, convinced of the impracticability of their scheme, would at last embrace pacific views, and would abandon an enterprise so obnoxious to all the potentates of Europe.

This reasoning of Henry was solid, and might justly engage him in dilatory and cautious measures: But there entered into his conduct another motive, which was apt to draw him beyond the just bounds, because founded on a ruling passion. His frugality, which by degrees degenerated into avarice, made him averse to all warlike enterprises and distant expeditions, and engaged him previously to try the expedient of negotiation. He dispatched Urswic his almoner, a man of address and abilities, to make offer of his mediation to the contending parties: An offer which he thought, if accepted by France, would soon lead to a composure of all differences; if refused or eluded, would at least discover the perseverance of that court in her ambitious projects. Urswic found the lady of Beaujeu, now dutchess of Bourbon, engaged in the siege of Nantz, and had the satisfaction to find that his master's offer of mediation was readily embraced, and with many expressions of confidence and moderation. That able princess concluded, that the duke of Orleans, who governed the court of Britanny, foreseeing that every accommodation must be made at his expence, would use all his interest to have Henry's proposal rejected; and would by that means make an apology for the French measures, and draw on the Bretons the reproach of obstinacy and injustice. The event justified her prudence. When the English ambassador made the same offer to the duke of

Dissimulation of the French court.

Britanny, he received for anſwer, in the name of that prince, that having ſo long acted the part of protector and guardian to Henry during his youth and adverſe fortune, he had expected from a monarch of ſuch virtue, more effectual aſſiſtance in his preſent diſtreſſes, than a barren offer of mediation, which ſuſpended not the progreſs of the French arms: That if Henry's gratitude were not ſufficient to engage him in ſuch a meaſure, his prudence, as king of England, ſhould diſcover to him the pernicious conſequences attending the conqueſt of Britanny, and its annexation to the crown of France: That that kingdom, already too powerful, would be enabled, by ſo great an acceſſion of force, to diſplay, to the ruin of England, that hoſtile diſpoſition which had always ſubſiſted between thoſe rival nations: That Britanny, ſo uſeful an ally, which, by its ſituation, gave the Engliſh an entrance into the heart of France, being annexed to that kingdom, would be equally enabled, from its ſituation, to diſturb, either by piracies or naval armaments, the commerce and peace of England: And that, if the duke rejected Henry's mediation, it proceeded neither from an inclination to a war, which he experienced to be ruinous to him, nor from a confidence in his own force, which he knew to be much inferior to that of the enemy; but, on the contrary, from a ſenſe of his preſent neceſſities, which muſt engage the king to act the part of his confederate, not that of a mediator. CHAP. XXV. 1488.

When this anſwer was reported to the king, he abandoned not the plan which he had formed: He only concluded, that ſome more time was requiſite to quell the obſtinacy of the Bretons, and make them ſubmit to reaſon. And when he learned that the people of Britanny, anxious for their duke's ſafety, had formed a tumultuary army of 60,000 men, and had obliged the French to raiſe the ſiege of Nantz, he fortified himſelf the more in his

CHAP. XXV. 1488.

opinion, that the court of France would at laſt be reduced, by multiplied obſtacles and difficulties, to abandon the project of reducing Britanny to ſubjection. He continued therefore his ſcheme of negotiation, and thereby expoſed himſelf to be deceived by the artifices of the French miniſtry; who, ſtill pretending pacific intentions, ſent lord Bernard Daubigny, a Scotchman of quality, to London, and preſſed Henry not to be diſcouraged in offering his mediation to the court of Britanny. The king, on his part, diſpatched another embaſſy, conſiſting of Urſwic the abbot of Abingdon, and ſir Richard Tonſtal, who carried new propoſals for an amicable treaty. No effectual ſuccours, meanwhile, were provided for the diſtreſſed Bretons. Lord Woodwille, brother to the queen-dowager, having aſked leave to raiſe underhand a body of volunteers, and to tranſport them into Britanny, met with a refuſal from the king, who was deſirous of preſerving the appearance of a ſtrict neutrality. That nobleman, however, ſtill perſiſted in his purpoſe. He went over to the Iſle of Wight, of which he was governor; levied a body of 400 men; and having at laſt obtained, as is ſuppoſed, the ſecret permiſſion of Henry, ſailed with them to Britanny. This enterpriſe proved fatal to the leader, and brought ſmall relief to the unhappy duke. The Bretons raſhly engaged in a general action with the French at St. Aubin, and were diſcomfited. Woodwille and all the Engliſh were put to the ſword; together with a body of Bretons, who had been accoutred in the garb of Engliſhmen, in order to ſtrike a greater terror into the French, to whom the martial proweſs of that nation was always formidable [q]. The duke of Orleans, the prince of Orange, and many other perſons of rank, were taken priſoners: And the military force of Britanny was totally broken.

28th July.

[q] Argentré Hiſt. de Bretagne, liv. xii.

The

The death of the duke, which followed soon after, threw affairs into still greater confusion, and seemed to threaten the state with a final subjection. CHAP. XXV. 1488.

THOUGH the king did not prepare against these events, so hurtful to the interests of England, with sufficient vigour and precaution, he had not altogether overlooked them. Determined to maintain a pacific conduct, as far as the situation of affairs would permit, he yet knew the warlike temper of his subjects, and observed, that their ancient and inveterate animosity to France was now revived by the prospect of this great accession to her power and grandeur. He resolved therefore to make advantage of this disposition, and draw some supplies from the people, on pretence of giving assistance to the duke of Britanny. He had summoned a parliament at Westminster[r]; and he soon persuaded them to grant him a considerable subsidy[s]. But this supply, though voted by parliament, involved the king in unexpected difficulties. The counties of Durham and York, always discontented with Henry's government, and farther provoked by the late oppressions, under which they had laboured, after the suppression of Simnel's rebellion, resisted the commissioners who were appointed to levy the tax. The commissioners, terrified with this appearance of sedition, made application to the earl of Northumberland, and desired of him advice and assistance in the execution of their office. That nobleman thought the matter of importance enough to consult the king; who, unwilling to yield to the humours of a discontented populace, and foreseeing the pernicious consequence of such a precedent, renewed his orders for strictly levying the imposition. Northumberland summoned together the justices and chief freeholders, and delivered the king's commands in

9th Sept.

An insurrection in the North,

[r] 9th November 1487. [s] Polydore Virgil, p. 579, says, that this imposition was a capitation tax; the other historians say, it was a tax of two shillings in the pound.

CHAP. XXV. 1488.

the most imperious terms, which, he thought, would enforce obedience, but which tended only to provoke the people, and make them believe him the adviser of those orders which he delivered to them[t]. They flew to arms, attacked Northumberland in his house, and put him to death. Having incurred such deep guilt, their mutinous humour prompted them to declare against the king himself; and being instigated by John Achamber, a seditious fellow of low birth, they chose sir John Egremond their leader, and prepared themselves for a vigorous resistance. Henry was not dismayed with an insurrection so precipitate and ill-supported. He immediately levied a force, which he put under the command of the earl of Surrey, whom he had freed from confinement, and received into favour. His intention was to send down these troops, in order to check the progress of the rebels; while he himself should follow with a greater body, which would absolutely insure success. But Surrey thought himself strong enough to encounter alone a raw and unarmed multitude; and he succeeded in the attempt. The rebels were dissipated; John Achamber was taken prisoner, and afterwards executed with some of his accomplices; sir John Egremond fled to the dutchess of Burgundy, who gave him protection; the greater number of the rebels received a pardon.

suppressed.

Henry had probably expected, when he obtained this grant from parliament, that he should be able to terminate the affair of Britanny by negotiation, and that he might thereby fill his coffers with the money levied by the imposition. But as the distresses of the Bretons still multiplied, and became every day more urgent; he found himself under the necessity of taking more vigorous measures, in order to support them. On the death of

[t] Bacon, 595.

the

the duke, the French had revived ſome antiquated claims to the dominion of the dutchy; and as the duke of Orleans was now captive in France, their former pretence for hoſtilities could no longer ſerve as a cover to their ambition. The king reſolved, therefore, to engage as auxiliary to Britanny; and to conſult the intereſts as well as deſires of his people, by oppoſing himſelf to the progreſs of the French power. Beſides entering into a league with Maximilian, and another with Ferdinand, which were diſtant reſources, he levied a body of troops to the number of 6000 men, with an intention of tranſporting them into Britanny. Still anxious, however, for the repayment of his expences, he concluded a treaty with the young dutcheſs, by which ſhe engaged to deliver into his hands two ſea-port towns, there to remain till ſhe ſhould entirely refund the charges of the armament[u]. Though he engaged for the ſervice of theſe troops during the ſpace of ten months only, yet was the dutcheſs obliged, by the neceſſity of her affairs, to ſubmit to ſuch rigid conditions, impoſed by an ally ſo much concerned in intereſt to protect her. The forces arrived under the command of lord Willoughby of Broke; and made the Bretons, during ſome time, maſters of the field. The French retired into their garriſons; and expected, by dilatory meaſures, to waſte the fire of the Engliſh, and diſguſt them with the enterpriſe. The ſcheme was well laid, and met with ſucceſs. Lord Broke found ſuch diſcord and confuſion in the counſels of Britanny, that no meaſures could be concerted for any undertaking; no ſupply obtained; no proviſions, carriages, artillery, or military ſtores procured. The whole court was rent into factions: No one miniſter had acquired the aſcendant: And whatever project was

CHAP. XXV. 1489.

King ſends forces into Britanny.

[u] Du Tillet, Recueil des Traités.

formed

CHAP. XXV. 1489.

formed by one, was ſure to be traverſed by another. The Engliſh, diſconcerted in every enterpriſe by theſe animoſities and uncertain counſels, returned home as ſoon as the time of their ſervice was elapſed; leaving only a ſmall garriſon in thoſe towns which had been conſigned into their hands. During their ſtay in Britanny, they had only contributed ſtill farther to waſte the country; and by their departure, they left it entirely at the mercy of the enemy. So feeble was the ſuccour which Henry, in this important conjuncture, afforded his ally, whom the invaſion of a foreign enemy, concurring with domeſtic diſſenſions, had reduced to the utmoſt diſtreſs.

THE great object of the domeſtic diſſenſions in Britanny was the diſpoſal of the young dutcheſs in marriage. The mareſchal Rieux, favoured by Henry, ſeconded the ſuit of the lord d'Albret, who led ſome forces to her aſſiſtance. The chancellor Montauban, obſerving the averſon of the dutcheſs to this ſuitor, inſiſted that a petty prince, ſuch as d'Albret, was unable to ſupport Anne in her preſent extremities; and he recommended ſome more powerful alliance, particularly that of Maximilian king
1490. of the Romans. This party at laſt prevailed; the marriage with Maximilian was celebrated by proxy; and the dutcheſs thenceforth aſſumed the title of Queen of the Romans. But this magnificent appellation was all ſhe gained by her marriage. Maximilian, deſtitute of troops and money, and embarraſſed with the continual revolts of the Flemings, could ſend no ſuccour to his diſtreſſed conſort; while d'Albret, enraged at the preference given to his rival, deſerted her cauſe, and received the French into Nantz, the moſt important place in the dutchy, both for ſtrength and riches.

THE French court now began to change their ſcheme with regard to the ſubjection of Britanny. Charles had formerly been affianced to Margaret daughter

daughter of Maximilian; who, though too young for the consummation of her marriage, had been sent to Paris to be educated, and at this time bore the title of Queen of France. Besides the rich dowry which she brought the king, she was, after her brother Philip, then in early youth, heir to all the dominions of the house of Burgundy; and seemed, in many respects, the most proper match that could be chosen for the young monarch. These circumstances had so blinded both Maximilian and Henry, that they never suspected any other intentions in the French court; nor were they able to discover that engagements, seemingly so advantageous, and so solemnly entered into, could be infringed and set aside. But Charles began to perceive that the conquest of Britanny, in opposition to the natives, and to all the great powers of Christendom, would prove a difficult enterprise; and that even if he should over-run the country, and make himself master of the fortresses, it would be impossible for him long to retain possession of them. The marriage alone of the dutchess could fully reannex that fief to the crown; and the present and certain enjoyment of so considerable a territory seemed preferable to the prospect of inheriting the dominions of the house of Burgundy; a prospect which became every day more distant and precarious. Above all, the marriage of Maximilian and Anne appeared destructive to the grandeur, and even security, of the French monarch; while that prince, possessing Flanders on the one hand, and Britanny on the other, might thus, from both quarters, make inroads into the heart of the country. The only remedy for these evils was therefore concluded to be the dissolution of the two marriages, which had been celebrated, but not consummated; and the espousal of the dutchess of Britanny by the king of France.

CHAP. XXV. 1490.

It was necessary that this expedient, which had not been foreseen by any court in Europe, and which they

CHAP. XXV. 1490.

they were all ſo much intereſted to oppoſe, ſhould be kept a profound ſecret, and ſhould be diſcovered to the world only by the full execution of it. The meaſures of the French miniſtry in the conduct of this delicate enterpriſe were wiſe and political. While they preſſed Britanny with all the rigours of war, they ſecretly gained the count of Dunois, who poſſeſſed great authority with the Bretons; and having alſo engaged in their intereſts the prince of Orange, couſin-german to the dutcheſs, they gave him his liberty, and ſent him into Britanny. Theſe partiſans, ſupported by other emiſſaries of France, prepared the minds of men for the great revolution projected, and diſplayed, though ſtill with many precautions, all the advantages of a union with the French monarchy. They repreſented to the barons of Britanny, that their country, haraſſed during ſo many years with perpetual war, had need of ſome repoſe, and of a ſolid and laſting peace with the only power that was formidable to them: That their alliance with Maximilian was not able to afford them even preſent protection; and, by cloſely uniting them to a power which was rival to the greatneſs of France, fixed them in perpetual enmity with that potent monarchy: That their vicinity expoſed them firſt to the inroads of the enemy; and the happieſt event which, in ſuch a ſituation, could befal them, would be to attain a peace, though by a final ſubjection to France, and by the loſs of that liberty tranſmitted to them from their anceſtors: And that any other expedient, compatible with the honour of the ſtate, and their duty to their ſovereign, was preferable to a ſcene of ſuch diſorder and devaſtation.

THESE ſuggeſtions had influence with the Bretons: But the chief difficulty lay in ſurmounting the prejudices of the young dutcheſs herſelf. That princeſs had imbibed a ſtrong prepoſſeſſion againſt the French nation, particularly againſt Charles, the author

author of all the calamities which, from her earliest infancy, had befallen her family. She had also fixed her affections on Maximilian; and as she now deemed him her husband, she could not, she thought, without incurring the greatest guilt, and violating the most solemn engagements, contract a marriage with any other person. In order to overcome her obstinacy, Charles gave the duke of Orleans his liberty, who, though formerly a suitor to the dutchess, was now contented to ingratiate himself with the king, by employing in his favour all the interest which he still possessed in Britanny. Mareschal Rieux and chancellor Montauban were reconciled by his mediation; and these rival ministers now concurred with the prince of Orange and the count of Dunois, in pressing the conclusion of a marriage with Charles. By their suggestion, Charles advanced with a powerful army, and invested Rennes, at that time the residence of the dutchess; who, assailed on all hands, and finding none to support her in her inflexibility, at last opened the gates of the city, and agreed to espouse the king of France. She was married at Langey in Touraine; conducted to St. Dennis, where she was crowned; thence made her entry into Paris, amidst the joyful acclamations of the people, who regarded this marriage as the most prosperous event that could have befallen the monarchy.

CHAP. XXV.

1490.

1491.

Annexation of Britanny to France.

The triumph and success of Charles was the most sensible mortification to the king of the Romans. He had lost a considerable territory, which he thought he had acquired, and an accomplished princess, whom he had espoused; he was affronted in the person of his daughter Margaret, who was sent back to him after she had been treated, during some years, as queen of France; he had reason to reproach himself with his own supine security, in neglecting the consummation of his marriage, which was

CHAP. XXV. 1491.

was easily practicable for him, and which would have rendered the tye indissoluble: These considerations threw him into the most violent rage, which he vented in very indecent expressions; and he threatened France with an invasion from the united arms of Austria, Spain, and England.

The king of England had also just reason to reproach himself with misconduct in this important transaction; and though the affair had terminated in a manner which he could not precisely foresee, his negligence in leaving his most useful ally so long exposed to the invasion of superior power, could not but appear, on reflection, the result of timid caution and narrow politics. As he valued himself on his extensive foresight and profound judgment, the ascendant acquired over him by a raw youth such as Charles, could not but give him the highest displeasure, and prompt him to seek vengeance, after all remedy for his miscarriage was become absolutely impracticable. But he was farther actuated by avarice, a motive still more predominant with him than either pride or revenge; and he sought, even from his present disappointments, the gratification of this ruling passion. On pretence of a French war, he issued a commission for levying a *Benevolence* on his people[u]; a species of taxation which had been abolished by a recent law of Richard III. This violence (for such it really was) fell chiefly on the commercial part of the nation, who were possessed of the ready money. London alone contributed to the amount of near 10,000 pounds. Archbishop Morton, the chancellor, instructed the commissioners to employ a dilemma, in which every one might be comprehended: If the persons applied to lived frugally, they were told that their par-

7th July.

[u] Rymer, vol. xii. p. 446. Bacon says that the benevolence was levied with consent of parliament, which is a mistake.

simony must necessarily have enriched them: If their method of living were splendid and hospitable, they were concluded to be opulent on account of their expences. This device was by some called chancellor Morton's fork, by others his crutch. CHAP. XXV. 1491.

So little apprehensive was the king of a parliament on account of his levying this arbitrary imposition, that he soon after summoned that assembly to meet at Westminster; and he even expected to enrich himself farther by working on their passions and prejudices. He knew the displeasure which the English had conceived against France on account of the acquisition of Britanny; and he took care to insist on that topic, in the speech which he himself pronounced to the parliament. He told them that France, elated with her late successes, had even proceeded to a contempt of England, and had refused to pay the tribute which Lewis XI. had stipulated to Edward IV.: That it became so warlike a nation as the English to be roused by this indignity, and not to limit their pretensions merely to repelling the present injury: That, for his part, he was determined to lay claim to the crown itself of France, and to maintain by force of arms so just a title, transmitted to him by his gallant ancestors: That Crecy, Poictiers, and Azincour, were sufficient to instruct them in their superiority over the enemy; nor did he despair of adding new names to the glorious catalogue: That a king of France had been prisoner in London, and a king of England had been crowned at Paris; events which should animate them to an emulation of like glory with that which had been enjoyed by their forefathers: That the domestic dissensions of England had been the sole cause of her losing these foreign dominions; and her present internal union would be the effectual means of recovering them: That where such lasting honour was in view, and such an important acquisition, it became not brave men to repine at the advance

27th Oct. A parliament.

CHAP. XXV. 1491.

advance of a little treaſure: And that, for his part, he was determined to make the war maintain itſelf; and hoped, by the invaſion of ſo opulent a kingdom as France, to increaſe, rather than diminiſh, the riches of the nation [w].

NOTWITHSTANDING theſe magnificent vaunts of the king, all men of penetration concluded, from the perſonal character of the man, and ſtill more from the ſituation of affairs, that he had no ſerious intention of puſhing the war to ſuch extremities as he pretended. France was not now in the ſame condition as when ſuch ſucceſsful inroads had been made upon her by former kings of England. The great fiefs were united to the crown; the princes of the blood were deſirous of tranquillity; the nation abounded with able captains and veteran ſoldiers; and the general aſpect of her affairs ſeemed rather to threaten her neighbours, than to promiſe them any conſiderable advantages againſt her. The levity and vain-glory of Maximilian were ſupported by his pompous titles; but were ill ſeconded by military power, and ſtill leſs by any revenue proportioned to them. The politic Ferdinand, while he made a ſhow of war, was actually negotiating for peace; and, rather than expoſe himſelf to any hazard, would accept of very moderate conceſſions from France. Even England was not free from domeſtic diſcontents; and in Scotland, the death of Henry's friend and ally James III. who had been murdered by his rebellious ſubjects, had made way for the ſucceſſion of his ſon James IV. who was devoted to the French intereſt, and would ſurely be alarmed at any important progreſs of the Engliſh arms. But all theſe obvious conſiderations had no influence on the parliament. Inflamed by the ideas of ſubduing France, and of enriching themſelves by the ſpoils of that kingdom, they gave into the ſnare

[w] Bacon, p. 601.

prepared

prepared for them, and voted the ſupply which the king demanded. Two fifteenths were granted him; and the better to enable his vaſſals and nobility to attend him, an act was paſſed, empowering them to ſell their eſtates, without paying any fines for alienation. CHAP. XXV. 1491.

THE nobility were univerſally ſeized with a deſire of military glory; and having credulouſly ſwallowed all the boaſts of the king, they dreamed of no leſs than carrying their triumphant banners to the gates of Paris, and putting the crown of France on the head of their ſovereign. Many of them borrowed large ſums, or ſold off manors, that they might appear in the field with greater ſplendour, and lead out their followers in more complete order. The king croſſed the ſea, and arrived at Calais on the ſixth of October, with an army of twenty-five thouſand foot and fixteen hundred horſe, which he put under the command of the duke of Bedford and the earl of Oxford: But as ſome inferred, from his opening the campaign in ſo late a ſeaſon, that peace would ſoon be concluded between the crowns, he was deſirous of ſuggeſting a contrary inference. "He had come over," he ſaid, "to make an entire conqueſt of France, which was not the work of one ſummer. It was therefore of no conſequence at what ſeaſon he began the invaſion; eſpecially as he had Calais ready for winter-quarters." As if he had ſeriouſly intended this enterpriſe, he inſtantly marched into the enemy's country, and laid ſiege to Bulloigne: But notwithſtanding this appearance of hoſtility, there had been ſecret advances made towards peace above three months before; and commiſſioners had been appointed to treat of the terms. The better to reconcile the minds of men to this unexpected meaſure, the king's ambaſſadors arrived in the camp from the Low Countries, and informed him that 1492. 6th Oct. War with France. Invaſion of France.

CHAP. XXV. 1492.

Maximilian was in no readineſs to join him; nor was any aſſiſtance to be expected from that quarter. Soon after meſſengers came from Spain, and brought news of a peace concluded between that kingdom and France, in which Charles had made a ceſſion of the counties of Rouſſillon and Cerdagne to Ferdinand. Though theſe articles of inteiligence were carefully diſperſed throughout the army, the king was ſtill apprehenſive leſt a ſudden peace, after ſuch magnificent promiſes and high expectations, might expoſe him to reproach. In order the more effectually to cover the intended meaſures, he ſecretly engaged the marquis of Dorſet, together with twenty-three perſons of diſtinction, to preſent him a petition for agreeing to a treaty with France. The pretence was founded on the late ſeaſon of the year, the difficulty of ſupplying the army at Calais during winter, the obſtacles which aroſe in the ſiege of Bulloigne, the deſertion of thoſe allies whoſe aſſiſtance had been moſt relied on: Events which might, all of them, have been foreſeen before the embarkation of the forces.

3d. Nov. Peace with France.

In conſequence of theſe preparatory ſteps, the biſhop of Exeter and lord Daubeny were ſent to confer at Eſtaples with the mareſchal de Cordes, and to put the laſt hand to the treaty. A few days ſufficed for that purpoſe: The demands of Henry were wholly pecuniary; and the king of France, who deemed the peaceable poſſeſſion of Britanny an equivalent for any ſum, and who was all on fire for his projected expedition into Italy, readily agreed to the propoſals made him. He engaged to pay Henry 745,000 crowns, near 400,000 pounds ſterling of our preſent money; partly as a reimburſement of the ſums advanced to Britanny, partly as arrears of the penſion due to Edward IV. And he ſtipulated a yearly penſion to Henry and his heirs of 25,000 crowns. Thus the king, as remarked

CHAP. XXV.

1492.

marked by his hiſtorian, made profit upon his ſubjects for the war; and upon his enemies for the peace [x]. And the people agreed that he had fulfilled his promiſe, when he ſaid to the parliament that he would make the war maintain itſelf. Maximilian was, if he pleaſed, comprehended in Henry's treaty; but he diſdained to be in any reſpect beholden to an ally of whom he thought he had reaſon to complain: He made a ſeparate peace with France, and obtained reſtitution of Artois, Franche-compté, and Charolois, which had been ceded as the dowry of his daughter when ſhe was affianced to the king of France.

The peace concluded between England and France was the more likely to continue, becauſe Charles, full of ambition and youthful hopes, bent all his attention to the ſide of Italy, and ſoon after undertook the conqueſt of Naples; an enterpriſe which Henry regarded with the greater indifference, as Naples lay remote from him, and France had never in any age been ſucceſsful in that quarter. The king's authority was fully eſtabliſhed at home; and every rebellion which had been attempted againſt him had hitherto tended only to confound his enemies, and conſolidate his power and influence. His reputation for policy and conduct was daily augmenting; his treaſures had increaſed even from the moſt unfavourable events; the hopes of all pretenders to his throne were cut off, as well by his marriage as by the iſſue which it had brought him. In this proſperous ſituation the king had reaſon to flatter himſelf with the proſpect of durable peace and tranquillity: But his inveterate and indefatigable enemies, whom he had wantonly provoked, raiſed him an adverſary, who long kept him in inquietude, and ſometimes even brought him into danger.

[x] Bacon, p. 605. Pol. Virg. p. 586.

CHAP. XXV. 1492.

THE dutchess of Burgundy, full of resentment for the depression of her family and its partisans, rather irritated than discouraged by the ill success of her past enterprises, was determined, at least, to disturb that government which she found it so difficult to subvert. By means of her emissaries she propagated a report that her nephew Richard Plantagenet, duke of York, had escaped from the Tower when his elder brother was murdered, and that he still lay somewhere concealed: And finding this rumour, however improbable, to be greedily received by the people, she had been looking out for some young man proper to personate that unfortunate prince.

Perkin Warbec.

THERE was one Osbec, or Warbec, a renegado Jew of Tournay, who had been carried by some business to London in the reign of Edward IV. and had there a son born to him. Having had opportunities of being known to the king, and obtaining his favour, he prevailed with that prince, whose manners were very affable, to stand godfather to his son, to whom he gave the name of Peter, corrupted, after the Flemish manner, into Peterkin, or Perkin. It was by some believed that Edward, among his amorous adventures, had a secret commerce with Warbec's wife; and people thence accounted for that resemblance which was afterwards remarked between young Perkin and that monarch[y]. Some years after the birth of this child Warbec returned to Tournay; where Perkin his son did not long remain, but by different accidents was carried from place to place, and his birth and fortunes became thereby unknown, and difficult to be traced by the most diligent inquiry. The variety of his adventures had happily favoured the natural versatility and sagacity of his genius; and he seemed to be a youth perfectly fitted to act any part, or assume any character. In

[y] Bacon, p. 606.

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this light he had been repreſented to the dutcheſs of Burgundy, who, ſtruck with the concurrence of ſo many circumſtances ſuited to her purpoſe, deſired to be made acquainted with the man on whom ſhe already began to ground her hopes of ſucceſs. She found him to exceed her moſt ſanguine expectations; ſo comely did he appear in his perſon, ſo graceful in his air, ſo courtly in his addreſs, ſo full of docility and good ſenſe in his behaviour and converſation. The leſſons neceſſary to be taught him, in order to his perſonating the duke of York, were ſoon learned by a youth of ſuch quick apprehenſion; but as the ſeaſon ſeemed not then favourable for his enterpriſe, Margaret, in order the better to conceal him, ſent him, under the care of lady Brampton, into Portugal, where he remained a year, unknown to all the world.

CHAP. XXV. 1492.

His impoſture.

THE war, which was then ready to break out between France and England, ſeemed to afford a proper opportunity for the diſcovery of this new phænomenon; and Ireland, which ſtill retained its attachments to the houſe of York, was choſen as the proper place for his firſt appearance[z]. He landed at Corke; and immediately aſſuming the name of Richard Plantagenet, drew to him partiſans among that credulous people. He wrote letters to the earls of Deſmond and Kildare, inviting them to join his party: He diſperſed every where the ſtrange intelligence of his eſcape from the cruelty of his uncle Richard: And men, fond of every thing new and wonderful, began to make him the general ſubject of their diſcourſe, and even the object of their favour.

THE news ſoon reached France; and Charles, prompted by the ſecret ſolicitations of the dutcheſs of Burgundy, and the intrigues of one Frion, a ſe-

[z] Polyd. Virg. p. 589.

CHAP. XXV.

1492.

cretary of Henry's, who had deserted his service, sent Perkin an invitation to repair to him at Paris. He received him with all the marks of regard due to the duke of York; settled on him a handsome pension, assigned him magnificent lodgings, and in order to provide at once for his dignity and security, gave him a guard for his person, of which lord Congresal accepted the office of captain. The French courtiers readily embraced a fiction which their sovereign thought it his interest to adopt: Perkin, both by his deportment and personal qualities, supported the prepossession which was spread abroad of his royal pedigree: And the whole kingdom was full of the accomplishments, as well as the singular adventures and misfortunes, of the young Plantagenet. Wonders of this nature are commonly augmented at a distance. From France the admiration and credulity diffused themselves into England: Sir George Nevil, sir John Taylor, and above a hundred gentlemen more, came to Paris, in order to offer their services to the supposed duke of York, and to share his fortunes: And the impostor had now the appearance of a court attending him, and began to entertain hopes of final success in his undertakings.

When peace was concluded between France and England at Estaples, Henry applied to have Perkin put into his hands; but Charles, resolute not to betray a young man, of whatever birth, whom he had invited into his kingdom, would agree only to dismiss him. The pretended Richard retired to the dutchess of Burgundy, and craving her protection and assistance, offered to lay before her all the proofs of that birth to which he laid claim. The princess affected ignorance of his pretensions; even put on the appearance of distrust; and having, as she said, been already deceived by Simnel, she was determined never again to be seduced by any impostor. She desired

He is avowed by the dutchess of Burgundy,

fired before all the world to be inſtructed in his reaſons for aſſuming the name which he bore; ſeemed to examine every circumſtance with the moſt ſcrupulous nicety; put many particular queſtions to him; affected aſtoniſhment at his anſwers; and at laſt, after long and ſevere ſcrutiny, burſt out into joy and admiration at his wonderful deliverance, embraced him as her nephew, the true image of Edward, the ſole heir of the Plantagenets, and the legitimate ſucceſſor to the Engliſh throne. She immediately aſſigned him an equipage ſuited to his pretended birth; appointed him a guard of thirty halberdiers; engaged every one to pay court to him; and on all occaſions honoured him with the appellation of the *White Roſe of England*. The Flemings, moved by the authority which Margaret, both from her rank and perſonal character, enjoyed among them, readily adopted the fiction of Perkin's royal deſcent: No ſurmiſe of his true birth was as yet heard of: Little contradiction was made to the prevailing opinion: And the Engliſh, from their great communication with the Low Countries, were every day more and more prepoſſeſſed in favour of the impoſtor. CHAP. XXV. 1492. 1493.

It was not the populace alone of England that gave credit to Perkin's pretenſions. Men of the higheſt birth and quality, diſguſted at Henry's government, by which they found the nobility depreſſed, began to turn their eyes towards the new claimant; and ſome of them even entered into a correſpondence with him. Lord Fitzwater, ſir Simon Mountford, ſir Thomas Thwaites, betrayed their inclination towards him: Sir William Stanley himſelf, lord chamberlain, who had been ſo active in raiſing Henry to the throne, moved either by blind credulity or a reſtleſs ambition, entertained the project of a revolt in favour of his enemy[a]. Sir Robert Clifford and William Barley were ſtill more open in their meaſures: They went over to Flanders, were introduced and by many of the Engliſh nobility.

[a] Bacon, p. 608.

CHAP. XXV. 1493.

by the dutchefs of Burgundy to the acquaintance of Perkin, and made him a tender of their ſervices. Clifford wrote back to England, that he knew perfectly the perſon of Richard duke of York, that this young man was undoubtedly that prince himſelf, and that no circumſtance of his ſtory was expoſed to the leaſt difficulty. Such poſitive intelligence, conveyed by a perſon of rank and character, was ſufficient, with many, to put the matter beyond queſtion, and excited the attention and wonder even of the moſt indifferent. The whole nation was held in ſuſpenſe; a regular conſpiracy was formed againſt the king's authority; and a correſpondence ſettled between the malcontents in Flanders and thoſe in England.

The king was informed of all theſe particulars; but agreeably to his character, which was both cautious and reſolute, he proceeded deliberately, though ſteadily, in counter-working the projects of his enemies. His firſt object was to aſcertain the death of the real duke of York, and to confirm the opinion that had always prevailed with regard to that event. Five perſons had been employed by Richard in the murder of his nephews, or could give evidence with regard to it; ſir James Tirrel, to whom he had committed the government of the Tower for that purpoſe, and who had ſeen the dead princes; Forreſt, Dighton, and Slater, who perpetrated the crime; and the prieſt who buried the bodies. Tirrel and Dighton alone were alive, and they agreed in the ſame ſtory; but as the prieſt was dead, and as the bodies were ſuppoſed to have been removed by Richard's orders, from the place where they were firſt interred, and could not now be found, it was not in Henry's power to put the fact, ſo much as he wiſhed, beyond all doubt and controverſy.

He met at firſt with more difficulty, but was in the end more ſucceſsful in detecting who this wonderful perſon was that thus boldly advanced pretenſions

sions to his crown. He dispersed his spies all over Flanders and England; he engaged many to pretend that they had embraced Perkin's party; he directed them to insinuate themselves into the confidence of the young man's friends; in proportion as they conveyed intelligence of any conspirator, he bribed his retainers, his domestic servants, nay, sometimes his confessor, and by these means traced up some other confederate; Clifford himself he engaged, by the hope of rewards and pardon, to betray the secrets committed to him; the more trust he gave to any of his spies, the higher resentment did he feign against them; some of them he even caused to be publicly anathematised, in order the better to procure them the confidence of his enemies: And in the issue, the whole plan of the conspiracy was clearly laid before him; and the pedigree, adventures, life, and conversation of the pretended duke of York. This latter part of the story was immediately published for the satisfaction of the nation: The conspirators he reserved for a slower and surer vengeance. CHAP. XXV. 1493.

MEANWHILE he remonstrated with the archduke Philip, on account of the countenance and protection which was afforded in his dominions to so infamous an impostor; contrary to treaties subsisting between the sovereigns, and to the mutual amity which had so long been maintained by the subjects of both states. Margaret had interest enough to get his application rejected; on pretence that Philip had no authority over the demesnes of the dutchess dowager. And the king, in resentment of this injury, cut off all commerce with the Low Countries, banished the Flemings, and recalled his own subjects from these provinces. Philip retaliated by like edicts; but Henry knew, that so mutinous a people as the Flemings would not long bear, in compliance with the humours of their prince, to be deprived 1494.

CHAP. XXV.

1494.

deprived of the beneficial branch of commerce which they carried on with England.

He had it in his power to inflict more effectual punishment on his domestic enemies; and when his projects were sufficiently matured, he failed not to make them feel the effects of his resentment. Almost in the same instant he arrested Fitzwater, Mountford, and Thwaites, together with William Daubeney, Robert Ratcliff, Thomas Cressenor, and Thomas Astwood. All these were arraigned, convicted, and condemned for high treason, in adhering and promising aid to Perkin. Mountford, Ratcliff, and Daubeney, were immediately executed: Fitzwater was sent over to Calais, and detained in custody; but being detected in practising on his keeper for an escape, he soon after underwent the same fate. The rest were pardoned, together with William Worseley dean of St. Paul's, and some others, who had been accused and examined, but not brought to public trial [b].

Greater and more solemn preparations were deemed requisite for the trial of Stanley, lord chamberlain, whose authority in the nation, whose domestic connexions with the king, as well as his former services, seemed to secure him against any accusation or punishment. Clifford was directed to come over privately to England, and to throw himself at the king's feet while he sat in council; craving pardon for past offences, and offering to atone for them by any services which should be required of him. Henry then told him, that the best proof he could give of penitence, and the only service he could now render him, was the full confession of his guilt, and the discovery of all his accomplices, however distinguished by rank or character. Encouraged by this exhortation, Clifford accused Stanley, then pre-

[b] Polydore Virgil, p. 592.

sent,

CHAP. XXV.

sent, as his chief abettor; and offered to lay before the council the full proof of his guilt. Stanley himself could not discover more surprise than was affected by Henry on the occasion. He received the intelligence as absolutely false and incredible; that a man, to whom he was in a great measure beholden for his crown, and even for his life; a man to whom by every honour and favour he had endeavoured to express his gratitude; whose brother, the earl of Derby, was his own father-in-law; to whom he had even committed the trust of his person, by creating him lord chamberlain: That this man, enjoying his full confidence and affection, not actuated by any motive of discontent or apprehension, should engage in a conspiracy against him. Clifford was therefore exhorted to weigh well the consequences of his accusation; but as he persisted in the same positive asseverations, Stanley was committed to custody, and was soon after examined before the council[c]. He denied not the guilt imputed to him by Clifford; he did not even endeavour much to extenuate it; whether he thought that a frank and open confession would serve as an atonement, or trusted to his present connexions and his former services for pardon and security. But princes are often apt to regard great services as a ground of jealousy, especially if accompanied with a craving and restless disposition in the person who has performed them. The general discontent also, and mutinous humour of the people, seemed to require some great example of severity. And as Stanley was one of the most opulent subjects in the kingdom, being possessed of above three thousand pounds a-year in land, and forty thousand marks in plate and money, besides other property of great value, the prospect of so rich a forfeiture was deemed no small motive for Henry's proceeding to extremities against him. After six

1494.

Trial and execution of Stanley.

1495.

15th Feb.

[c] Bacon, p. 611. Polyd. Virg. p. 593.

weeks

CHAP. XXV. 1495.

weeks delay, which was interpoſed in order to ſhew that the king was reſtrained by doubts and ſcruples; the priſoner was brought to his trial, condemned, and preſently after beheaded. Hiſtorians are not agreed with regard to the crime which was proved againſt him. The general report is, that he ſhould have ſaid in confidence to Clifford, that if he were ſure the young man who appeared in Flanders was really ſon to king Edward, he never would bear arms againſt him. The ſentiment might diſguſt Henry, as implying a preference of the houſe of York to that of Lancaſter; but could ſcarcely be the ground, even in thoſe arbitrary times, of a ſentence of high treaſon againſt Stanley. It is more probable, therefore, as is aſſerted by ſome hiſtorians, that he had expreſsly engaged to aſſiſt Perkin, and had actually ſent him ſome ſupply of money.

THE fate of Stanley made great impreſſion on the kingdom, and ſtruck all the partiſans of Perkin with the deepeſt diſmay. From Clifford's deſertion they found that all their ſecrets were betrayed; and as it appeared that Stanley, while he ſeemed to live in the greateſt confidence with the king, had been continually ſurrounded by ſpies, who reported and regiſtered every action in which he was engaged, nay, every word which fell from him, a general diſtruſt took place, and all mutual confidence was deſtroyed, even among intimate friends and acquaintance. The jealous and ſevere temper of the king, together with his great reputation for ſagacity and penetration, kept men in awe, and quelled not only the movements of ſedition, but the very murmurs of faction. Libels, however, creeped out againſt Henry's perſon and adminiſtration; and being greedily propagated by every ſecret art, ſhewed that there ſtill remained among the people a conſiderable root of diſcontent, which wanted only a proper opportunity to diſcover itſelf.

BUT

CHAP. XXV. 1495.

But Henry continued more intent on increasing the terrors of his people, than on gaining their affections. Trusting to the great success which attended him in all his enterprises, he gave every day more and more a loose to his rapacious temper, and employed the arts of perverted law and justice, in order to exact fines and compositions from his people. Sir William Capel, alderman of London, was condemned on some penal statutes to pay the sum of 2743 pounds, and was obliged to compound for sixteen hundred and fifteen. This was the first noted case of the kind; but it became a precedent, which prepared the way for many others. The management, indeed, of these arts of chicanery, was the great secret of the king's administration. While he depressed the nobility, he exalted and honoured and caressed the lawyers; and by that means both bestowed authority on the laws, and was enabled, whenever he pleased, to pervert them to his own advantage. His government was oppressive; but it was so much the less burthensome, as by his extending royal authority, and curbing the nobles, he became in reality the sole oppressor in his kingdom.

As Perkin found that the king's authority daily gained ground among the people, and that his own pretensions were becoming obsolete, he resolved to attempt something which might revive the hopes and expectations of his partisans. Having collected a band of outlaws, pirates, robbers, and necessitous persons of all nations, to the number of 600 men, he put to sea, with a resolution of making a descent in England, and of exciting the common people to arms, since all his correspondence with the nobility was cut off by Henry's vigilance and severity. Information being brought him that the king had made a progress to the north, he cast anchor on the coast of Kent, and sent some of his retainers ashore, who invited the country to join him. The gentlemen of Kent assembled some troops to oppose him; but they

CHAP. XXV. 1495.

they purposed to do more essential service than by repelling the invasion: They carried the semblance of friendship to Perkin, and invited him to come himself ashore, in order to take the command over them. But the wary youth, observing that they had more order and regularity in their movements than could be supposed in new levied forces who had taken arms against established authority, refused to entrust himself into their hands; and the Kentish troops, despairing of success in their stratagem, fell upon such of his retainers as were already landed; and besides some whom they slew, they took a hundred and fifty prisoners. These were tried and condemned; and all of them executed by orders from the king, who was resolved to use no lenity towards men of such desperate fortunes [d].

A parliament.

This year a parliament was summoned in England, and another in Ireland; and some remarkable laws were passed in both countries. The English parliament enacted, that no person who should by arms or otherwise assist the king for the time being, should ever afterwards, either by course of law or act of parliament, be attainted for such an instance of obedience. This statute might be exposed to some censure, as favourable to usurpers; were there any precise rule which always, even during the most factious times, could determine the true successor, and render every one inexcusable who did not submit to him. But as the titles of princes are then the great subject of dispute, and each party pleads topics in its own favour, it seems but equitable to secure those who act in support of public tranquillity, an object at all times of undoubted benefit and importance. Henry, conscious of his disputed title, promoted this law, in order to secure his partisans against all events; but as he had himself observed a contrary practice with regard to Richard's ad-

[d] Polydore Virgil, p. 595.

herents,

herents, he had reaſon to apprehend, that during the violence which uſually enſues on public convulſions, his example rather than his law would, in caſe of a new revolution, be followed by his enemies. And the attempt to bind the legiſlature itſelf, by preſcribing rules to future parliaments, was contradictory to the plaineſt principles of political government. CHAP. XXV. 1495.

THIS parliament alſo paſſed an act, empowering the king to levy, by courſe of law, all the ſums which any perſon had agreed to pay by way of benevolence: A ſtatute by which that arbitrary method of taxation was indirectly authoriſed and juſtified.

THE king's authority appeared equally prevalent and uncontrolled in Ireland. Sir Edward Poynings had been ſent over to that country, with an intention of quelling the partiſans of the houſe of York, and of reducing the natives to ſubjection. He was not ſupported by forces ſufficient for that enterpriſe: The Iriſh, by flying into their woods and moraſſes and mountains, for ſome time eluded his efforts: But Poynings ſummoned a parliament at Dublin, where he was more ſucceſsful. He paſſed that memorable ſtatute, which ſtill bears his name, and which eſtabliſhes the authority of the Engliſh government in Ireland. By this ſtatute all the former laws of England were made to be of force in Ireland; and no bill can be introduced into the Iriſh parliament, unleſs it previouſly receive the ſanction of the council of England. This latter clauſe ſeems calculated for enſuring the dominion of the Engliſh; but was really granted at the deſire of the Iriſh commons, who intended by that means to ſecure themſelves from the tyranny of their lords, particularly of ſuch lieutenants or deputies as were of Iriſh birth [e].

[e] Sir John Davies, p. 235.

WHILE

CHAP. XXV. 1495.

WHILE Henry's authority was thus eſtabliſhed throughout his dominions, and general tranquillity prevailed, the whole continent was thrown into combuſtion by the French invaſion of Italy, and by the rapid ſucceſs which attended Charles in that raſh and ill-concerted enterpriſe. The Italians, who had entirely loſt the uſe of arms, and who, in the midſt of continual wars, had become every day more unwarlike, were aſtoniſhed to meet an enemy, that made the field of battle not a pompous tournament, but a ſcene of blood, and fought, at the hazard of their own lives, the death of their enemy. Their effeminate troops were diſperſed every where on the approach of the French army: Their beſt fortified cities opened their gates: Kingdoms and ſtates were in an inſtant overturned: And through the whole length of Italy, which the French penetrated without reſiſtance, they ſeemed rather to be taking quarters in their own country than making conqueſts over an enemy. The maxims which the Italians during that age followed in negotiations, were as ill calculated to ſupport their ſtates as the habits to which they were addicted in war: A treacherous, deceitful, and inconſiſtent ſyſtem of politics prevailed; and even thoſe ſmall remains of fidelity and honour, which were preſerved in the councils of the other European princes, were ridiculed in Italy as proofs of ignorance and ruſticity. Ludovico duke of Milan, who invited the French to invade Naples, had never deſired or expected their ſucceſs; and was the firſt that felt terror from the proſperous iſſue of thoſe projects which he himſelf had concerted. By his intrigues a league was formed among ſeveral potentates to oppoſe the progreſs of Charles's conqueſts, and ſecure their own independency. This league was compoſed of Ludovico himſelf, the pope, Maximilian king of the Romans, Ferdinand of Spain, and the republic of Venice. Henry too entered into the confederacy; but was

not put to any expence or trouble in consequence of his engagements. The king of France, terrified by so powerful a combination, retired from Naples with the greater part of his army, and returned to France. The forces which he left in his new conquest were, partly by the revolt of the inhabitants, partly by the invasion of the Spaniards, soon after subdued; and the whole kingdom of Naples suddenly returned to its allegiance under Ferdinand, son to Alphonso, who had been suddenly expelled by the irruption of the French. Ferdinand died soon after; and left his uncle Frederic in full possession of the throne. CHAP. XXV. 1495.

CHAP. XXVI.

Perkin retires to Scotland——Inſurrection in the Weſt——Battle of Blackheath——Truce with Scotland——Perkin taken priſoner——Perkin executed——The earl of Warwic executed——Marriage of prince Arthur with Catharine of Arragon——His death——Marriage of the princeſs Margaret with the king of Scotland——Oppreſſions of the people——A parliament——Arrival of the king of Caſtile——Intrigues of the earl of Suffolk——Sickneſs of the king——His death—and character——His laws.

CHAP. XXVI. 1495.

AFTER Perkin was repulſed from the coaſt of Kent, he retired into Flanders; but as he found it impoſſible to procure ſubſiſtence for himſelf and his followers, while he remained in tranquillity, he ſoon after made an attempt upon Ireland, which had always appeared forward to join every invader of Henry's authority. But Poynings had now put the affairs of that iſland in ſo good a poſture, that Perkin met with little ſucceſs; and being tired of the ſavage life which he was obliged to lead while ſkulking among the wild Iriſh, he bent his courſe towards Scotland, and preſented himſelf to James IV. who then governed that kingdom. He had been previouſly recommended to this prince by the king of France, who was diſguſted at Henry for entering into the general league againſt him; and this recommendation was even ſeconded by Maximilian, who, though one of the confederates, was alſo diſpleaſed with the king on account of his

his prohibiting in England all commerce with the Low Countries. The countenance given to Perkin by theſe princes procured him a favourable reception with the king of Scotland, who aſſured him, that whatever he were, he never ſhould repent putting himſelf in his hands[f]: The inſinuating addreſs and plauſible behaviour of the youth himſelf ſeem to have gained him credit and authority. James, whom years had not yet taught diſtruſt or caution, was ſeduced to believe the ſtory of Perkin's birth and adventures; and he carried his confidence ſo far as to give him in marriage the lady Catharine Gordon, daughter of the earl of Huntley, and related to himſelf; a young lady too, eminent for virtue as well as beauty. CHAP. XXVI. 1495. Perkin retires to Scotland.

THERE ſubſiſted at that time a great jealouſy between the courts of England and Scotland; and James was probably the more forward on that account to adopt any fiction which he thought might reduce his enemy to diſtreſs or difficulty. He ſuddenly reſolved to make an inroad into England, attended by ſome of the borderers; and he carried Perkin along with him, in hopes that the appearance of the pretended prince might raiſe an inſurrection in the northern counties. Perkin himſelf diſperſed a manifeſto, in which he ſet forth his own ſtory, and craved the aſſiſtance of all his ſubjects in expelling the uſurper, whoſe tyranny and mal-adminiſtration, whoſe depreſſion of the nobility by the elevation of mean perſons, whoſe oppreſſion of the people by multiplied impoſitions and vexations, had juſtly, he ſaid, rendered him odious to all men. But Perkin's pretenſions, attended with repeated diſappointments, were now become ſtale in the eyes even of the populace; and the hoſtile diſpoſitions which ſubſiſted between the kingdoms rendered a prince, ſupported by the Scots, but an unwelcome 1496.

[f] Bacon, p. 615. Polydore Virgil, p. 596, 597.

CHAP. XXVI. 1496. present to the English nation. The ravages also committed by the borderers, accustomed to licence and disorder, struck a terror into all men; and made the people prepare rather for repelling the invaders than for joining them. Perkin, that he might support his pretensions to royal birth, feigned great compassion for the misery of his plundered subjects; and publicly remonstrated with his ally against the depredations exercised by the Scottish army[g]: But James told him, that he doubted his concern was employed only in behalf of an enemy, and that he was anxious to preserve what never should belong to him. That prince now began to perceive that his attempt would be fruitless; and hearing of an army which was on its march to attack him, he thought proper to retreat into his own country.

The king discovered little anxiety to procure either reparation or vengeance for this insult committed on him by the Scottish nation: His chief concern was to draw advantage from it, by the pretence which it might afford him to levy impositions on his own subjects. He summoned a parliament, to whom he made bitter complaints against the irruption of the Scots, the absurd imposture countenanced by that nation, the cruel devastations committed in the northern counties, and the multiplied insults thus offered both to the king and kingdom of England. The parliament made the expected return to this discourse, by granting a subsidy to the amount of 120,000 pounds, together with two fifteenths. After making this grant, they were dismissed.

1497. The vote of parliament for imposing the tax was without much difficulty procured by the authority of Henry; but he found it not so easy to levy the money upon his subjects. The people, who were

[g] Polydore Virgil, p. 598.

acquainted

acquainted with the immenſe treaſures which he had amaſſed, could ill brook the new impoſitions raiſed on every ſlight occaſion; and it is probable that the flaw, which was univerſally known to be in his title, made his reign the more ſubject to inſurrections and rebellions. When the ſubſidy began to be levied in Cornwal, the inhabitants, numerous and poor, robuſt and courageous, murmured againſt a tax occaſioned by a ſudden inroad of the Scots, from which they eſteemed themſelves entirely ſecure, and which had uſually been repelled by the force of the northern counties. Their ill-humour was farther incited by one Michael Joſeph, a farrier of Bodmin, a notable prating fellow, who, by thruſting himſelf forward on every occaſion, and being loudeſt in every complaint againſt the government, had acquired an authority among thoſe rude people. Thomas Flammoc too, a lawyer, who had become the oracle of the neighbourhood, encouraged the ſedition, by informing them that the tax, though impoſed by parliament, was entirely illegal; that the northern nobility were bound by their tenures to defend the nation againſt the Scots; and that if theſe new impoſitions were tamely ſubmitted to, the avarice of Henry and of his miniſters would ſoon render the burden intolerable to the nation. The Corniſh, he ſaid, muſt deliver to the king a petition, ſeconded by ſuch a force as would give it authority; and, in order to procure the concurrence of the reſt of the kingdom, care muſt be taken, by their orderly deportment, to ſhew that they had nothing in view but the public good, and the redreſs of all thoſe grievances under which the people had ſo long laboured.

CHAP. XXVI. 1497.

Inſurrection in the Weſt.

ENCOURAGED by theſe ſpeeches, the multitude flocked together, and armed themſelves with axes, bills, bows, and ſuch weapons as country people are uſually poſſeſſed of. Flammoc and Joſeph were choſen their leaders. They ſoon conducted the

CHAP. XXVI. 1497.

Corniſh through the county of Devon, and reached that of Somerſet. At Taunton the rebels killed, in their fury, an officious and eager commiſſioner of the ſubſidy, whom they called the provoſt of Perin. When they reached Wells, they were joined by lord Audley, a nobleman of an ancient family, popular in his deportment, but vain, ambitious, and reſtleſs in his temper. He had from the beginning maintained a ſecret correſpondence with the firſt movers of the inſurrection; and was now joyfully received by them as their leader. Proud of the countenance given them by ſo conſiderable a nobleman, they continued their march; breathing deſtruction to the king's miniſters and favourites, particularly to Morton, now a cardinal, and ſir Reginald Bray, who were deemed the moſt active inſtruments in all his oppreſſions. Notwithſtanding their rage againſt the adminiſtration, they carefully followed the directions given them by their leaders; and as they met with no reſiſtance, they committed, during their march, no violence or diſorder.

The rebels had been told by Flammoc, that the inhabitants of Kent, as they had ever, during all ages, remained unſubdued, and had even maintained their independence during the Norman conqueſt, would ſurely embrace their party, and declare themſelves for a cauſe which was no other than that of public good and general liberty. But the Kentiſh people had very lately diſtinguiſhed themſelves by repelling Perkin's invaſion; and as they had received from the king many gracious acknowledgments for this ſervice, their affections were, by that means, much conciliated to his government. It was eaſy, therefore, for the earl of Kent, lord Abergavenny, and lord Cobham, who poſſeſſed great authority in thoſe parts, to retain the people in obedience; and the Corniſh rebels, though they pitched their camp near Eltham, at the very gates of London, and invited all the people to join them, got reinforcement from

from no quarter. There wanted not discontents every where, but no one would take part in so rash and ill-concerted an enterprise; and besides, the situation in which the king's affairs then stood, discouraged even the boldest and most daring. CHAP. XXVI. 1497.

HENRY, in order to oppose the Scots, had already levied an army, which he put under the command of lord Daubeney the chamberlain; and as soon as he heard of the Cornish insurrection, he ordered it to march southwards, and suppress the rebels. Not to leave the northern frontier defenceless, he dispatched thither the earl of Surrey, who assembled the forces on the borders, and made head against the enemy. Henry found here the concurrence of the three most fatal incidents that can befal a monarchy; a foreign enemy, a domestic rebellion, and a pretender to his crown; but he enjoyed great resources in his army and treasure, and still more, in the intrepidity and courage of his own temper. He did not, however, immediately give full scope to his military spirit. On other occasions, he had always hastened to a decision; and it was a usual saying with him, *that he desired but to see his rebels:* But as the Cornish mutineers behaved in an inoffensive manner, and committed no spoil on the country; as they received no accession of force on their march or in their encampment; and as such hasty and popular tumults might be expected to diminish every moment by delay; he took post in London, and assiduously prepared the means of ensuring victory.

Battle of Blackheath.

AFTER all his forces were collected, he divided them into three bodies, and marched out to assail the enemy. The first body, commanded by the earl of Oxford, and under him by the earls of Essex and Suffolk, were appointed to place themselves behind the hill on which the rebels were encamped: The second and most considerable, Henry put under the command of lord Daubeney, and ordered

CHAP. XXVI. 1497.

him to attack the enemy in front, and bring on the action. The third he kept as a body of reserve about his own person, and took post in St. George's fields; where he secured the city, and could easily, as occasion served, either restore the fight, or finish the victory. To put the enemy off their guard, he had spread a report that he was not to attack them till some days after; and the better to confirm them in this opinion, he began not the action till near the evening. Daubeney beat a detachment of the rebels from Deptford bridge; and before the main body could be in order to receive him, he had gained the ascent of the hill, and placed himself in array before them. They were formidable from their numbers, being sixteen thousand strong, and were not defective in valour; but being tumultuary troops, ill armed, and not provided with cavalry or artillery, they were but an unequal match for the king's forces. Daubeney began the attack with courage, and even with a contempt of the enemy, which had almost proved fatal to him. He rushed into the midst of them, and was taken prisoner; but soon after was released by his own troops. After some resistance, the rebels were broken, and put to flight [h]. Lord Audley, Flammoc, and Joseph, their leaders, were taken, and all three executed. The latter seemed even to exult in his end, and boasted with a preposterous ambition, that he should make a figure in history. The rebels, being surrounded on every side by the king's troops, were almost all made prisoners, and immediately dismissed without farther punishment: Whether that Henry was satisfied with the victims who had fallen in the field, and who amounted to near two thousand, or that he pitied the ignorance and simplicity of the multitude, or favoured them on account of their inoffensive behaviour, or was pleased that they had

June 22d.

[h] Polydore Virgil, p. 601.

him never,

never, during their insurrection, disputed his title, and had shewn no attachment to the house of York, the highest crime, of which, in his eyes, they could have been guilty. CHAP. XXVI. 1497.

THE Scottish king was not idle during these commotions in England. He levied a considerable army, and sat down before the castle of Norham in Northumberland; but found that place, by the precaution of Fox bishop of Durham, so well provided both with men and ammunition, that he made little or no progress in the siege. Hearing that the earl of Surrey had collected some forces, and was advancing upon him, he retreated into his own country, and left the frontiers exposed to the inroads of the English general, who besieged and took Aiton, a small castle lying a few miles beyond Berwic. These unsuccessful or frivolous attempts on both sides prognosticated a speedy end to the war; and Henry, notwithstanding his superior force, was no less desirous than James of terminating the differences between the nations. Not to depart, however, from his dignity, by making the first advances, he employed in this friendly office Peter Hialas, a man of address and learning, who had come to him as ambassador from Ferdinand and Isabella, and who was charged with a commission of negotiating the marriage of the infanta Catherine their daughter, with Arthur prince of Wales[i].

HIALAS took a journey northwards, and offered his mediation between James and Henry, as minister of a prince who was in alliance with both potentates. Commissioners were soon appointed to meet, and confer on terms of accommodation. The first demand of the English was, that Perkin should be put into their hands: James replied, that he himself was no judge of the young man's pretensions, but having received him as a supplicant,

[i] Polydore Virgil, p. 603.

and

CHAP. XXVI. 1497.

and promiſed him protection, he was determined not to betray a man who had truſted to his good faith and his generoſity. The next demand of the Engliſh met with no better reception: They required reparation for the ravages committed by the late inroads into England: The Scottiſh commiſſioners replied, that the ſpoils were like water ſpilt upon the ground, which could never be recovered, and that Henry's ſubjects were better able to bear the loſs, than their maſter's to repair it. Henry's commiſſioners next propoſed, that the two kings ſhould have an interview at Newcaſtle, in order to adjuſt all differences; but James ſaid, that he meant to treat of a peace, not to go a begging for it. Leſt the conferences ſhould break off altogether without effect, a truce was concluded for ſome months; and James, perceiving that, while Perkin remained in Scotland, he himſelf never ſhould enjoy a ſolid peace with Henry, privately deſired him to depart the kingdom.

Truce with Scotland.

Access was now barred Perkin into the Low Countries, his uſual retreat in all his diſappointments. The Flemiſh merchants, who ſeverely felt the loſs reſulting from the interruption of commerce with England, had made ſuch intereſt in the archduke's council, that commiſſioners were ſent to London, in order to treat of an accommodation. The Flemiſh court agreed, that all Engliſh rebels ſhould be excluded the Low Countries; and in this prohibition the demeſnes of the dutcheſs-dowager were expreſsly comprehended. When this principal article was agreed to, all the other terms were eaſily adjuſted. A treaty of commerce was finiſhed, which was favourable to the Flemings, and to which they long gave the appellation of *Intercurſus magnus*, the great treaty. And when the Engliſh merchants returned to their uſual abode at Antwerp, they were publicly received, as in proceſſion, with joy and feſtivity.

CHAP. XXVI. 1497.

PERKIN was a Fleming by deſcent, though born in England; and it might therefore be doubted, whether he were included in the treaty between the two nations: But as he muſt diſmiſs all his Engliſh retainers if he took ſhelter in the Low Countries, and as he was ſure of a cold reception, if not bad uſage, among people who were determined to keep on terms of friendſhip with the court of England; he thought fit rather to hide himſelf, during ſome time, in the wilds and faſtneſſes of Ireland. Impatient, however, of a retreat, which was both diſagreeable and dangerous, he held conſultations with his followers, Herne, Skelton, and Aſtley, three broken tradeſmen: By their advice, he reſolved to try the affections of the Corniſh, whoſe mutinous diſpoſition, notwithſtanding the king's lenity, ſtill ſubſiſted, after the ſuppreſſion of their rebellion. No ſooner did he appear at Bodmin in Cornwal, than the populace, to the number of three thouſand, flocked to his ſtandard; and Perkin, elated with this appearance of ſucceſs, took on him, for the firſt time, the appellation of Richard IV. king of England. Not to ſuffer the expectations of his followers to languiſh, he preſented himſelf before Exeter; and, by many fair promiſes, invited that city to join him. Finding that the inhabitants ſhut their gates againſt him, he laid ſiege to the place; but being unprovided with artillery, ammunition, and every thing requiſite for the attempt, he made no progreſs in his undertaking. Meſſengers were ſent to the king, informing him of his inſurrection: The citizens of Exeter, meanwhile, were determined to hold out to the laſt extremity, in expectation of receiving ſuccour from the well-known vigilance of that monarch.

WHEN Henry was informed that Perkin was landed in England, he expreſſed great joy, and prepared himſelf with alacrity to attack him, in hopes of being able, at length, to put a period to preten-

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CHAP. XXVI. 1497.

sions which had so long given him vexation and inquietude. All the courtiers, sensible that their activity on this occasion would be the most acceptable service which they could render the king, displayed their zeal for the enterprise, and forwarded his preparations. The lords Daubeney and Broke, with sir Rice ap Thomas, hastened forward with a small body of troops to the relief of Exeter. The earl of Devonshire, and the most considerable gentlemen in the county of that name, tooks arms of their own accord, and marched to join the king's generals. The duke of Buckingham put himself at the head of a troop, consisting of young nobility and gentry, who served as volunteers, and who longed for an opportunity of displaying their courage and their loyalty. The king himself prepared to follow with a considerable army; and thus all England seemed united against a pretender who had at first engaged their attention, and divided their affections.

PERKIN, informed of these great preparations, immediately raised the siege of Exeter, and retired to Taunton. Though his followers now amounted to the number of near seven thousand, and seemed still resolute to maintain his cause, he himself despaired of success, and secretly withdrew to the sanctuary of Beaulieu in the new forest. The Cornish rebels submitted to the king's mercy, and found that it was not yet exhausted in their behalf. Except a few persons of desperate fortunes who were executed, and some others who were severely fined, all the rest were dismissed with impunity. Lady Catherine Gordon, wife to Perkin, fell into the hands of the victor, and was treated with a generosity which does him honour. He soothed her mind with many marks of regard, placed her in a reputable station about the queen, and assigned her a pension, which she enjoyed even under his successor.

HENRY

HENRY deliberated what courſe to take with Perkin himſelf. Some counſelled him to make the privileges of the church yield to reaſons of ſtate, to take him by violence from the ſanctuary, to inflict on him the puniſhment due to his temerity, and thus at once put an end to an impoſture which had long diſturbed the government, and which the credulity of the people, and the artifices of malcontents, were ſtill capable of reviving. But the king deemed not the matter of ſuch importance as to merit ſo violent a remedy. He employed ſome perſons to deal with Perkin, and perſuade him, under promiſe of pardon, to deliver himſelf into the king's hands[1]. The king conducted him, in a ſpecies of mock triumph, to London. As Perkin paſſed along the road, and through the ſtreets of the city, men of all ranks flocked about him, and the populace treated with the higheſt deriſion his fallen fortunes. They ſeemed deſirous of revenging themſelves, by their inſults, for the ſhame which their former belief of his impoſtures had thrown upon them. Though the eyes of the nation were generally opened with regard to Perkin's real parentage, Henry required of him a confeſſion of his life and adventures; and he ordered the account of the whole to be diſperſed, ſoon after, for the ſatisfaction of the public. But as his regard to decency made him entirely ſuppreſs the ſhare which the dutcheſs of Burgundy had had in contriving and conducting the impoſture, the people, who knew that ſhe had been the chief inſtrument in the whole affair, were inclined, on account of the ſilence on that head, to pay the leſs credit to the authenticity of the narrative.

CHAP. XXVI. 1498.

Perkin taken priſoner.

BUT Perkin, though his life was granted him, was ſtill detained in cuſtody; and keepers were ap- 1499.

[1] Polydore Virgil, p. 606.

CHAP. XXVI. 1499.

pointed to guard him. Impatient of confinement, he broke from his keepers, and flying to the sanctuary of Shyne, put himself into the hands of the prior of that monastery. The prior had obtained great credit by his character of sanctity; and he prevailed on the king again to grant a pardon to Perkin. But in order to reduce him to still greater contempt, he was set in the stocks at Westminster and Cheapside, and obliged in both places to read aloud to the people the confession which had formerly been published in his name. He was then confined to the Tower, where his habits of restless intrigue and enterprise followed him. He insinuated himself into the intimacy of four servants of sir John Digby, lieutenant of the Tower; and, by their means, opened a correspondence with the earl of Warwic, who was confined in the same prison. This unfortunate prince, who had from his earliest youth been shut up from the commerce of men, and who was ignorant even of the most common affairs of life, had fallen into a simplicity which made him susceptible of any impression. The continued dread also of the more violent effects of Henry's tyranny, joined to the natural love of liberty, engaged him to embrace a project for his escape, by the murder of the lieutenant; and Perkin offered to conduct the whole enterprise. The conspiracy escaped not the king's vigilance: It was even very generally believed that the scheme had been laid by himself, in order to draw Warwic and Perkin into the snare: But the subsequent execution of two of Digby's servants for the contrivance, seems to clear the king of that imputation, which was indeed founded more on the general idea entertained of his character, than on any positive evidence.

Perkin, by this new attempt, after so many enormities, had rendered himself totally unworthy of

CHAP. XXVI.

of mercy; and he was accordingly arraigned, condemned, and ſoon after hanged at Tyburn, perſiſting ſtill in the confeſſion of his impoſture[m]. It happened about that very time, that one Wilford, a cordwainer's ſon, encouraged by the ſurpriſing credit given to other impoſtures, had undertaken to perſonate the earl of Warwic; and a prieſt had even ventured from the pulpit to recommend his cauſe to the people, who ſeemed ſtill to retain a propenſity to adopt it. This incident ſerved Henry as a pretence for his ſeverity towards that prince. He was brought to trial, and accuſed not of contriving his eſcape (for as he was committed for no crime, the deſire of liberty muſt have been regarded as natural and innocent), but of forming deſigns to diſturb the government, and raiſe an inſurrection among the people. Warwic confeſſed the indictment, was condemned, and the ſentence was executed upon him.

1499. Perkin executed.

The earl of Warwic executed. 21ſt Nov.

THIS violent act of tyranny, the great blemiſh of Henry's reign, by which he deſtroyed the laſt remaining male of the line of Plantagenet, begat great diſcontent among the people, who ſaw an unhappy prince, that had long been denied all the privileges of his high birth, even been cut off from the common benefits of nature, now at laſt deprived of life itſelf, merely for attempting to ſhake off that oppreſſion under which he laboured. In vain did Henry endeavour to alleviate the odium of this guilt, by ſharing it with his ally Ferdinand of Arragon, who, he ſaid, had ſcrupled to give his daughter Catherine in marriage to Arthur, while any male deſcendant of the houſe of York remained. Men, on the contrary, felt higher indignation at ſeeing a young prince ſacrificed, not to law and juſtice, but to the jealous politics of two ſubtle and crafty tyrants.

[m] See note [M] at the end of the volume.

BUT

CHAP. XXVI.

1499. But though these discontents festered in the minds of men, they were so checked by Henry's watchful policy and steady severity, that they seemed not to weaken his government; and foreign princes, deeming his throne now entirely secure, paid him rather the greatest deference and attention. The archduke Philip, in particular, desired an interview with him; and Henry, who had passed over to Calais, agreed to meet him in St. Peter's church near that city. The archduke, on his approaching the king, made haste to alight, and offered to hold Henry's stirrup; a mark of condescension which that prince would not admit of. He called the king *father*, *patron*, *protector*; and, by his whole behaviour, expressed a strong desire of conciliating the friendship of England. The duke of Orleans had succeeded to the crown of France by the appellation of Lewis XII. and having carried his arms into Italy, and subdued the dutchy of Milan, his progress begat jealousy in Maximilian, Philip's father, as well as in Ferdinand, his father-in-law. By the counsel, therefore, of these monarchs, the young prince endeavoured by every art to acquire the amity of Henry, whom they regarded as the chief counterpoise to the greatness of France. No particular plan, however, of alliance seems to have been concerted between these two princes in their interview: All passed in general professions of affection and regard; at least, in remote projects of a closer union, by the future intermarriages of their children, who were then in a state of infancy.

1500. The pope too, Alexander VI. neglected not the friendship of a monarch whose reputation was spread over Europe. He sent a nuncio into England, who exhorted the king to take part in the great alliance projected for the recovery of the Holy Land, and to lead in person his forces against the infidels. The general frenzy for crusades was now entirely exhausted

exhausted in Europe; but it was still thought a necessary piece of decency to pretend zeal for those pious enterprises. Henry regretted to the nuncio the distance of his situation, which rendered it inconvenient for him to expose his person in defence of the Christian cause. He promised, however, his utmost assistance by aids and contributions; and rather than the pope should go alone to the holy wars, unaccompanied by any monarch, he even promised to overlook all other considerations, and to attend him in person. He only required as a necessary condition, that all differences should previously be adjusted among Christian princes, and that some sea-port towns in Italy should be consigned to him for his retreat and security. It was easy to conclude, that Henry had determined not to intermeddle in any war against the Turk: But as a great name, without any real assistance, is sometimes of service, the knights of Rhodes, who were at that time esteemed the bulwark of Christendom, chose the king protector of their order. CHAP. XXVI. 1500.

But the prince whose alliance Henry valued the most, was Ferdinand of Arragon, whose vigorous and steady policy, always attended with success, had rendered him in many respects the most considerable monarch in Europe. There was also a remarkable similarity of character between these two princes: Both were full of craft, intrigue, and design; and though a resemblance of this nature be a slender foundation for confidence and amity, where the interests of the parties in the least interfere; such was the situation of Henry and Ferdinand, that no jealousy ever on any occasion arose between them. The king had now the satisfaction of completing a marriage, which had been projected and negotiated during the course of seven years, between Arthur prince of Wales, and the Infanta Catherine, fourth daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella; he near sixteen 1501. Marriage of prince Arthur with Catherine of Arragon. 12th Nov.

CHAP. XXVI.

years of age, she eighteen. But this marriage proved in the issue unprosperous. The young prince a few months after sickened and died, much regretted by the nation. Henry, desirous to continue his alliance with Spain, and also unwilling to restore Catherine's dowry, which was two hundred thousand ducats, obliged his second son Henry, whom he created prince of Wales, to be contracted to the Infanta. The prince made all the opposition of which a youth of twelve years of age was capable; but as the king persisted in his resolution, the espousals were at length, by means of the pope's dispensation, contracted between the parties: An event which was afterwards attended with the most important consequences.

1502. 2d April. His death.

Marriage of the princess Margaret with the king of Scotland.

The same year another marriage was celebrated, which was also in the next age productive of great events: The marriage of Margaret, the king's elder daughter, with James king of Scotland. This alliance had been negotiated during three years, though interrupted by several broils; and Henry hoped, from the completion of it, to remove all source of discord with that neighbouring kingdom, by whose animosity England had so often been infested. When this marriage was deliberated on in the English council, some objected that England might, by means of that alliance, fall under the dominion of Scotland. "No," replied Henry, "Scotland in that event will only become an accession to England." Amidst these prosperous incidents the king met with a domestic calamity, which made not such impression on him as it merited: His queen died in child-bed; and the infant did not long survive her. This princess was deservedly a favourite of the nation; and the general affection for her increased, on account of the harsh treatment which it was thought she met with from her consort.

1503. 11th Feb.

The

CHAP. XXVI. 1503.

THE situation of the king's affairs, both at home and abroad, was now in every respect very fortunate. All the efforts of the European princes, both in war and negotiation, were turned to the side of Italy; and the various events which there arose made Henry's alliance be courted by every party, yet interested him so little as never to touch him with concern or anxiety. His close connexions with Spain and Scotland ensured his tranquillity; and his continued successes over domestic enemies, owing to the prudence and vigour of his conduct, had reduced the people to entire submission and obedience. Uncontrolled, therefore, by apprehension or opposition of any kind, he gave full scope to his natural propensity; and avarice, which had ever been his ruling passion, being increased by age and encouraged by absolute authority, broke all restraints of shame or justice. He had found two ministers, Empson and Dudley, perfectly qualified to second his rapacious and tyrannical inclinations, and to prey upon his defenceless people. These instruments of oppression were both lawyers; the first of mean birth, of brutal manners, of an unrelenting temper; the second better born, better educated, and better bred, but equally unjust, severe, and inflexible. By their knowledge in law these men were qualified to pervert the forms of justice to the oppression of the innocent; and the formidable authority of the king supported them in all their iniquities.

Oppressions of the people.

IT was their usual practice at first to observe so far the appearance of law as to give indictments to those whom they intended to oppress: Upon which the persons were committed to prison, but never brought to trial; and were at length obliged, in order to recover their liberty, to pay heavy fines and ransoms, which were called mitigations and compositions. By degrees the very appearance of law was neglected: The two ministers sent forth their precepts to attach men, and summon them

CHAP. XXVI. 1503.

before themſelves and ſome others, at their private houſes, in a court of commiſſion, where in a ſummary manner, without trial or jury, arbitrary decrees were iſſued, both in pleas of the crown, and controverſies between private parties. Juries themſelves, when ſummoned, proved but ſmall ſecurity to the ſubject; being brow-beaten by theſe oppreſſors; nay fined, impriſoned, and puniſhed, if they gave ſentence againſt the inclination of the miniſters. The whole ſyſtem of the feudal law, which ſtill prevailed, was turned into a ſcheme of oppreſſion. Even the king's wards, after they came of age, were not ſuffered to enter into poſſeſſion of their lands without paying exorbitant fines. Men were alſo haraſſed with informations of intruſion upon ſcarce colourable titles. When an outlawry in a perſonal action was iſſued againſt any man, he was not allowed to purchaſe his charter of pardon, except on the payment of a great ſum; and if he refuſed the compoſition required of him, the ſtrict law, which in ſuch caſes allows forfeiture of goods, was rigorouſly inſiſted on. Nay, without any colour of law, the half of men's lands and rents were ſeized during two years, as a penalty in caſe of outlawry. But the chief means of oppreſſion employed by theſe miniſters were the penal ſtatutes, which, without conſideration of rank, quality, or ſervices, were rigidly put in execution againſt all men: Spies, informers, and inquiſitors, were rewarded and encouraged in every quarter of the kingdom: And no difference was made whether the ſtatute were beneficial or hurtful, recent or obſolete, poſſible or impoſſible to be executed. The ſole end of the king and his miniſters was to amaſs money, and bring every one under the laſh of their authority [n].

[n] Bacon, p. 629, 630. Hollingſhed, p. 504. Polyd. Virg. p. 613. 615.

THROUGH

THROUGH the prevalence of such an arbitrary and iniquitous administration, the English, it may safely be affirmed, were considerable losers by their ancient privileges, which secured them from all taxations, except such as were imposed by their own consent in parliament. Had the king been empowered to levy general taxes at pleasure, he would naturally have abstained from these oppressive expedients, which destroyed all security in private property, and begat an universal diffidence throughout the nation. In vain did the people look for protection from the parliament, which was pretty frequently summoned during this reign. That assembly was so overawed, that at this very time, during the greatest rage of Henry's oppressions, the commons chose Dudley their speaker, the very man who was the chief instrument of his iniquities. And though the king was known to be immensely opulent, and had no pretence of wars or expensive enterprises of any kind, they granted him the subsidy which he demanded. But so insatiable was his avarice, that next year he levied a new benevolence, and renewed that arbitrary and oppressive method of taxation. By all these arts of accumulation, joined to a rigid frugality in his expence, he so filled his coffers, that he is said to have possessed in ready money the sum of 1,800,000 pounds: A treasure almost incredible, if we consider the scarcity of money in those times[o].

CHAP. XXVI.

1503.

1504. 25th Jan. A parliament.

1505.

BUT while Henry was enriching himself by the spoils of his oppressed people, there happened an event abroad which engaged his attention, and was even

[o] Silver was, during this reign, at 37 shillings and sixpence a pound, which makes Henry's treasure near three millions of our present money. Besides, many commodities have become above thrice as dear by the increase of gold and silver in Europe. And what is a circumstance of still greater weight, all other states were then very poor in comparison of what they are at present: These circumstances make Henry's treasure appear very great; and may lead us to conceive the oppressions of his government.

CHAP. XXVI. 1505.

the object of his anxiety and concern. Isabella, queen of Castile, died about this time; and it was foreseen, that by this incident the fortunes of Ferdinand her husband would be much affected. The king was not only attentive to the fate of his ally, and watchful lest the general system of Europe should be affected by so important an event: He also considered the similarity of his own situation with that of Ferdinand, and regarded the issue of these transactions as a precedent for himself. Joan, the daughter of Ferdinand by Isabella, was married to the archduke Philip, and being in right of her mother heir of Castile, seemed entitled to dispute with Ferdinand the present possession of that kingdom. Henry knew, that notwithstanding his own pretensions by the house of Lancaster, the greater part of the nation was convinced of the superiority of his wife's title; and he dreaded lest the prince of Wales, who was daily advancing towards manhood, might be tempted by ambition to lay immediate claim to the crown. By his perpetual attention to depress the partisans of the York family, he had more closely united them into one party, and increased their desire of shaking off that yoke under which they had so long laboured, and of taking every advantage which his oppressive government should give his enemies against him. And as he possessed no independent force like Ferdinand, and governed a kingdom more turbulent and unruly, which he himself by his narrow politics had confirmed in factious prejudices; he apprehended that his situation would prove in the issue still more precarious.

Nothing at first could turn out more contrary to the king's wishes than the transactions in Spain. Ferdinand, as well as Henry, had become very unpopular, and from a like cause, his former exactions and impositions; and the states of Castile discovered an evident resolution of preferring the title of Philip and

and Joan. In order to take advantage of these favourable dispositions, the archduke, now king of Castile, attended by his consort, embarked for Spain during the winter season; but meeting with a violent tempest in the channel, was obliged to take shelter in the harbour of Weymouth. Sir John Trenchard, a gentleman of authority in the county of Dorset, hearing of a fleet upon the coast, had assembled some forces; and being joined by sir John Cary, who was also at the head of an armed body, he came to that town. Finding that Philip, in order to relieve his sickness and fatigue, was already come ashore, he invited him to his house; and immediately dispatched a messenger to inform the court of this important incident. The king sent in all haste the earl of Arundel to compliment Philip on his arrival in England, and to inform him that he intended to pay him a visit in person, and to give him a suitable reception in his dominions. Philip knew that he could not now depart without the king's consent; and therefore, for the sake of dispatch, he resolved to anticipate his visit, and to have an interview with him at Windsor. Henry received him with all the magnificence possible, and with all the seeming cordiality; but he resolved, notwithstanding, to draw some advantage from this involuntary visit paid him by his royal guest.

CHAP. XXVI. 1506.

Arrival of the king of Castile.

Edmond de la Pole earl of Suffolk, nephew to Edward IV. and brother to the earl of Lincoln, slain in the battle of Stoke, had some years before killed a man in a sudden fit of passion, and had been obliged to apply to the king for a remission of the crime. The king had granted his request; but being little indulgent to all persons connected with the house of York, he obliged him to appear openly in court and plead his pardon. Suffolk, more resenting the affront than grateful for the favour, had fled into Flanders, and taken shelter with his aunt, the dutchess of Burgundy: But being promised forgive-

Intrigues of the earl of Suffolk.

CHAP. XXVI. 1506.

neſs by the king, he returned to England, and obtained a new pardon. Actuated, however, by the natural inquietude of his temper, and uneaſy from debts which he had contracted by his great expence at prince Arthur's wedding, he again made an elopement into Flanders. The king, well acquainted with the general diſcontent which prevailed againſt his adminiſtration, neglected not this incident, which might become of importance; and he employed his uſual artifices to elude the efforts of his enemies. He directed ſir Robert Curſon, governor of the caſtle of Hammes, to deſert his charge, and to inſinuate himſelf into the confidence of Suffolk, by making him a tender of his ſervices. Upon information ſecretly conveyed by Curſon, the king ſeized William Courtney, eldeſt ſon to the earl of Devonſhire, and married to the lady Catherine, ſiſter of the queen; William de la Pole, brother to the earl of Suffolk; ſir James Tirrel, and ſir James Windham, with ſome perſons of inferior quality; and he committed them to cuſtody. Lord Abergavenny and ſir Thomas Green were alſo apprehended; but were ſoon after releaſed from their confinement. William de la Pole was long detained in priſon; Courtney was attainted, and though not executed, he recovered not his liberty during the king's life-time. But Henry's chief ſeverity fell upon ſir James Windham and ſir James Tirrel, who were brought to their trial, condemned and executed: The fate of the latter gave general ſatisfaction, on account of his participation in the murder of the young princes, ſons of Edward IV. Notwithſtanding theſe diſcoveries and executions, Curſon was ſtill able to maintain his credit with the earl of Suffolk: Henry, in order to remove all ſuſpicion, had ordered him to be excommunicated, together with Suffolk himſelf, for his pretended rebellion. But after that traitor had performed all the ſervices expected from him, he ſuddenly deſerted

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the earl, and came over to England, where the king received him with unuſual marks of favour and confidence. Suffolk, aſtoniſhed at this inſtance of perfidy, finding that even the dutcheſs of Burgundy, tired with ſo many fruitleſs attempts, had become indifferent to his cauſe, fled ſecretly into France, thence into Germany, and returned at laſt into the Low Countries; where he was protected, though not countenanced, by Philip, then in cloſe alliance with the king. CHAP. XXVI. 1506.

HENRY neglected not the preſent opportunity of complaining to his gueſt of the reception which Suffolk had met with in his dominions. "I really "thought," replied the king of Caſtile, "that "your greatneſs and felicity had ſet you far above "apprehenſions from any perſon of ſo little conſe- "quence: But, to give you ſatisfaction, I ſhall "baniſh him my ſtate." "I expect that you will "carry your complaiſance farther," ſaid the king; "I deſire to have Suffolk put into my hands, "where alone I can depend upon his ſubmiſſion "and obedience." "That meaſure," ſaid Philip, "will reflect diſhonour upon you as well as myſelf. "You will be thought to have treated me as a pri- "ſoner." "Then the matter is at an end," replied the king, "for I will take that diſhonour upon "me; and ſo your honour is ſaved [p]." The king of Caſtile found himſelf under the neceſſity of complying; but he firſt exacted Henry's promiſe that he would ſpare Suffolk's life. That nobleman was invited over to England by Philip; as if the king would grant him pardon, on the interceſſion of his friend and ally. Upon his appearance he was committed to the Tower; and the king of Caſtile, having fully ſatisfied Henry, as well by this conceſſion as by ſigning a treaty of commerce between England and Caſtile, which was advantageous to the former kingdom [q],

[p] Bacon, 633. [q] Rymer, vol. xiii. p. 142.

was

CHAP. XXVI. 1507. was at last allowed to depart, after a stay of three months. He landed in Spain, was joyfully received by the Castilians, and put in possession of the throne. He died soon after; and Joan his widow, falling into deep melancholy, Ferdinand was again enabled to reinstate himself in authority, and to govern till the day of his death the whole Spanish monarchy.

THE king survived these transactions two years; but nothing memorable occurs in the remaining part of his reign, except his affiancing his second daughter, Mary, to the young archduke, Charles, son of Philip of Castile. He entertained also some intentions of marriage for himself, first with the queen-dowager of Naples, relict of Ferdinand; afterwards with the dutchess-dowager of Savoy, daughter of Maximilian, and sister of Philip. But the decline of his health put an end to all such thoughts; and he began to cast his eye towards that future existence, which the iniquities and severities of his reign rendered a very dismal prospect to him. To allay the terrors under which he laboured, he endeavoured, by distributing alms, and founding religious houses, to make atonement for his crimes, and to purchase, by the sacrifice of part of his ill-gotton treasures, a reconciliation with his offended Maker. Remorse even seized him, at intervals, for the abuse of his authority by Empson and Dudley; but not sufficient to make him stop the rapacious hand of those oppressors. Sir William Capel was again fined two thousand pounds, under some frivolous pretence, and was committed to the Tower for daring to murmur against the iniquity. Harris, an alderman of London, was indicted, and died of vexation before his trial came to an issue. Sir Laurence Ailmer, who had been mayor, and his two sheriffs, were condemned in heavy fines, and sent to prison till they made payment. The king gave countenance to all these oppressions; till death, by its nearer ap-

1508.

Sickness of the king.

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proaches, impreſſed new terrors upon him; and he then ordered, by a general clauſe in his will, that reſtitution ſhould be made to all thoſe whom he had injured. He died of a conſumption, at his favourite palace of Richmond, after a reign of twenty-three years and eight months, and in the fifty-ſecond year of his age[r]. CHAP. XXVI. 1509. His death, 22d April.

THE reign of Henry VII. was, in the main, fortunate for his people at home, and honourable abroad. He put an end to the civil wars with which the nation had long been haraſſed, he maintained peace and order in the ſtate, he depreſſed the former exorbitant power of the nobility, and, together with the friendſhip of ſome foreign princes, he acquired the conſideration and regard of all. He loved peace without fearing war; though agitated with continual ſuſpicions of his ſervants and miniſters, he diſcovered no timidity, either in the conduct of his affairs, or in the day of battle; and though often ſevere in his puniſhments, he was commonly leſs actuated by revenge than by maxims of policy. The ſervices which he rendered the people were derived from his views of private advantage rather than the motives of public ſpirit; and where he deviated from intereſted regards, it was unknown to himſelf, and ever from the malignant prejudices of faction, or the mean projects of avarice; not from the ſallies of paſſion, or allurements of pleaſure; ſtill leſs from the benign motives of friendſhip and generoſity. His capacity was excellent, but ſomewhat contracted by the narrowneſs of his heart; he poſſeſſed inſinuation and addreſs, but never employed theſe talents except where ſome great point of intereſt was to be gained; and while he neglected to conciliate the affections of his people, he often felt the danger of reſting his authority on their fear and reverence alone. He was always extremely attentive to his affairs; but poſſeſſed not the faculty of ſeeing far into futurity; and character.

[r] Dugd. Baronage, II. p. 237.

and

CHAP. XXVI. 1509.

and was more expert at providing a remedy for his miſtakes, than judicious in avoiding them. Avarice was, on the whole, his ruling paſſion[s]; and he remains an inſtance, almoſt ſingular, of a man placed in a high ſtation, and poſſeſſed of talents for great affairs, in whom that paſſion predominated above ambition. Even among private perſons, avarice is commonly nothing but a ſpecies of ambition, and is chiefly incited by the proſpect of that regard, diſtinction, and conſideration, which attend on riches.

THE power of the kings of England had always been ſomewhat irregular or diſcretionary; but was ſcarcely ever ſo abſolute during any former reign, at leaſt after the eſtabliſhment of the great charter, as during that of Henry. Beſides the advantages derived from the perſonal character of the man, full of vigour, induſtry, and ſeverity, deliberate in all projects, ſteady in every purpoſe, and attended with caution as well as good fortune in every enterpriſe; he came to the throne after long and bloody civil wars, which had deſtroyed all the great nobility, who alone could reſiſt the encroachments of his authority: The people were tired with diſcord and inteſtine convulſions, and willing to ſubmit to uſurpations, and even to injuries, rather than plunge themſelves anew into like miſeries: The fruitleſs efforts made againſt him ſerved always, as is uſual, to confirm his authority: As he ruled by a faction, and the leſſer faction, all thoſe on whom he conferred offices, ſenſible that they owed every thing to his protection, were willing to ſupport his power, though

[s] As a proof of Henry's attention to the ſmalleſt profits, Bacon tells us, that he had ſeen a book of accompts kept by Empſon, and ſubſcribed in almoſt every leaf by the king's own hand. Among other articles was the following: "*Item*, Received of ſuch a one "five marks for a pardon, which if it do not paſs the money to be "repayed, or the party otherwiſe ſatisfied." Oppoſite to the memorandum the king had writ with his own hand, "otherwiſe ſatis-"fied." Bacon, p. 630.

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at the expence of juſtice and national privileges. These ſeem the chief cauſes which at this time beſtowed on the crown ſo conſiderable an addition of prerogative, and rendered the preſent reign a kind of epoch in the Engliſh conſtitution. CHAP. XXVI. 1509.

THIS prince, though he exalted his prerogative above law, is celebrated by his hiſtorian for many good laws which he made be enacted for the government of his ſubjects. Several conſiderable regulations, indeed, are found among the ſtatutes of this reign, both with regard to the police of the kingdom, and its commerce: But the former are generally contrived with much better judgment than the latter. The more ſimple ideas of order and equity are ſufficient to guide a legiſlator in every thing that regards the internal adminiſtration of juſtice: But the principles of commerce are much more complicated, and require long experience and deep reflection to be well underſtood in any ſtate. The real conſequence of a law or practice is there often contrary to firſt appearances. No wonder that during the reign of Henry VII. theſe matters were frequently miſtaken; and it may ſafely be affirmed, that even in the age of lord Bacon very imperfect and erroneous ideas were formed on that ſubject. His laws.

EARLY in Henry's reign the authority of the Star Chamber, which was before founded on common law and ancient practice, was in ſome caſes confirmed by act of parliament [t]: Lord Bacon extols the utility of this court; but men began, even during the age of that hiſtorian, to feel that ſo arbitrary a juriſdiction was incompatible with liberty; and in proportion as the ſpirit of independence ſtill roſe higher in the nation, the averſion to it increaſed, till it was entirely aboliſhed by act of parliament in

[t] See note [N] at the end of the volume.

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CHAP. XXVI.

1509.

the reign of Charles I. a little before the commencement of the civil wars.

Laws were paſſed in this reign, ordaining the king's ſuit for murder to be carried on within a year and day [u]. Formerly it did not uſually commence till after; and as the friends of the perſon murdered often in the interval compounded matters with the criminal, the crime frequently paſſed unpuniſhed. Suits were given to the poor *in forma pauperis*, as it is called: That is, without paying dues for the writs, or any fees to the counſel [w]: A good law at all times, eſpecially in that age, when the people laboured under the oppreſſion of the great; but a law difficult to be carried into execution. A law was made againſt carrying off any woman by force [x]. The benefit of clergy was abridged [y]; and the criminal, on the firſt offence, was ordered to be burned in the hand with a letter, denoting his crime; after which he was puniſhed capitally for any new offence. Sheriffs were no longer allowed to fine any perſon, without previouſly ſummoning him before their court [z]. It is ſtrange that ſuch a practice ſhould ever have prevailed. Attaint of juries was granted in caſes which exceeded forty pounds value [a]: A law which has an appearance of equity, but which was afterwards found inconvenient. Actions popular were not allowed to be eluded by fraud or covin. If any ſervant of the king's conſpired againſt the life of the ſteward, treaſurer, or comptroller of the king's houſehold, this deſign, though not followed by any overt act, was made liable to the puniſhment of felony [b]. This ſtatute was enacted for the ſecurity

[u] 3 H. 7. cap. 1.
[x] 3 H. 7. cap. 2.
[z] 11 H. 7. cap. 15.
[b] 3 H. 7. cap. 13.
[w] 11 H. 7. cap. 12.
[y] 4 H. 7. cap. 13.
[a] Ibid. cap. 24. 19 H. 7. cap. 100.

of

of archbiſhop Morton, who found himſelf expoſed to the enmity of great numbers. CHAP. XXVI.

1509.

THERE ſcarcely paſſed any ſeſſion during this reign without ſome ſtatute againſt engaging retainers, and giving them badges or liveries [c]; a practice by which they were in a manner inliſted under ſome great lord, and were kept in readineſs to aſſiſt him in all wars, inſurrections, riots, violences, and even in bearing evidence for him in courts of juſtice [d]. This diſorder, which had prevailed during many reigns, when the law could give little protection to the ſubject, was then deeply rooted in England; and it required all the vigilance and rigour of Henry to extirpate it. There is a ſtory of his ſeverity againſt this abuſe; and it ſeems to merit praiſe, though it is commonly cited as an inſtance of his avarice and rapacity. The earl of Oxford, his favourite general, in whom he always placed great and deſerved confidence, having ſplendidly entertained him at his caſtle at Heningham, was deſirous of making a parade of his magnificence at the departure of his royal gueſt; and ordered all his retainers, with their liveries and badges, to be drawn up in two lines, that their appearance might be the more gallant and ſplendid. "My lord," ſaid the king, "I have "heard much of your hoſpitality; but the truth far "exceeds the report. Theſe handſome gentlemen "and yeomen, whom I ſee on both ſides of me, "are no doubt your menial ſervants." The earl ſmiled, and confeſſed that his fortune was too narrow for ſuch magnificence. "They are moſt of them," ſubjoined he, "my retainers, who are come to do "me ſervice at this time, when they know I am "honoured with your majeſty's preſence." The king ſtarted a little, and ſaid, "By my faith, my

[c] 3 H. 7. cap. 1. & 12. 11 H. 7. cap. 3. 19 H. 7. cap. 14.
[d] 3 H. 7. cap. 12. 11 H. 7. cap. 25.

"lord,

CHAP. XXVI. 1509.

"lord, I thank you for your good cheer, but I must "not allow my laws to be broken in my sight. My "attorney must speak with you." Oxford is said to have paid no less than fifteen thousand marks, as a composition for his offence.

The increase of the arts, more effectually than all the severities of law, put an end to this pernicious practice. The nobility, instead of vying with each other in the number and boldness of their retainers, acquired by degrees a more civilized species of emulation, and endeavoured to excel in the splendour and elegance of their equipage, houses, and tables. The common people, no longer maintained in vicious idleness by their superiors, were obliged to learn some calling or industry, and became useful both to themselves and to others. And it must be acknowledged, in spite of those who declaim so violently against refinement in the arts, or what they are pleased to call luxury, that as much as an industrious tradesman is both a better man and a better citizen than one of those idle retainers who formerly depended on the great families; so much is the life of a modern nobleman more laudable than that of an ancient baron[e].

But the most important law in its consequences which was enacted during the reign of Henry, was that by which the nobility and gentry acquired a power of breaking the ancient entails, and of alienating their estates[f]. By means of this law, joined to the beginning luxury and refinement of the age, the great fortunes of the barons were gradually dissipated, and the property of the commons increased in England. It is probable that Henry foresaw

[e] See note [O] at the end of the volume.

[f] 4 H. 7. cap. 24. The practice of breaking entails by means of a fine and recovery was introduced in the reign of Edward the IVth: But it was not, properly speaking, law till the statute of Henry the VIIth; which, by correcting some abuses that attended that practice, gave indirectly a sanction to it.

and intended this consequence; because the constant scheme of his policy consisted in depressing the great, and exalting churchmen, lawyers, and men of new families, who were more dependant on him. CHAP. XXVI. 1509.

This king's love of money naturally led him to encourage commerce, which increased his customs; but if we may judge by most of the laws enacted during his reign, trade and industry were rather hurt than promoted by the care and attention given to them. Severe laws were made against taking interest for money, which was then denominated usury[g]. Even the profits of exchange were prohibited as favouring of usury[h], which the superstition of the age zealously proscribed. All evasive contracts, by which profits could be made from the loan of money, were also carefully guarded against[i]. It is needless to observe how unreasonable and iniquitous these laws, how impossible to be executed, and how hurtful to trade, if they could take place. We may observe, however, to the praise of this king, that sometimes, in order to promote commerce, he lent to merchants sums of money without interest, when he knew that their stock was not sufficient for those enterprises which they had in view[k].

Laws were made against the exportation of money, plate, or bullion[l]: A precaution which serves to no other purpose than to make more be exported. But so far was the anxiety on this head carried, that merchants alien, who imported commodities into the kingdom, were obliged to invest in English commodities all the money acquired by their sales, in order to prevent their conveying it away in a clandestine manner[m].

It was prohibited to export horses; as if that exportation did not encourage the breed, and render

[g] 3 H. 7. cap. 5.
[h] Ibid. cap. 6.
[i] 7 H. 7. cap. 8.
[k] Polyd. Virg.
[l] 4 H. 7. cap. 23.
[m] 3 H. 7. cap. 8.

CHAP. XXVI. 1509.

them more plentiful in the kingdom [n]. In order to promote archery, no bows were to be ſold at a higher price than ſix ſhillings and four-pence [o], reducing money to the denomination of our time. The only effect of this regulation muſt be, either that the people would be ſupplied with bad bows, or none at all. Prices were alſo fixed to woollen cloth [p], to caps and hats [q]: And the wages of labourers were regulated by law [r]. It is evident that theſe matters ought always to be left free, and be entruſted to the common courſe of buſineſs and commerce. To ſome it may appear ſurpriſing, that the price of a yard of ſcarlet cloth ſhould be limited to ſix and twenty ſhillings, money of our age; that of a yard of coloured cloth to eighteen; higher prices than theſe commodities bear at preſent; and that the wages of a tradeſman, ſuch as a maſon, bricklayer, tyler, &c. ſhould be regulated at near ten-pence a day; which is not much inferior to the preſent wages given in ſome parts of England. Labour and commodities have certainly riſen ſince the diſcovery of the Weſt-Indies; but not ſo much in every particular as is generally imagined. The greater induſtry of the preſent times has increaſed the number of tradeſmen and labourers, ſo as to keep wages nearer a par than could be expected from the great increaſe of gold and ſilver. And the additional art employed in the finer manufactures has even made ſome of theſe commodities fall below their former value. Not to mention that merchants and dealers, being contented with leſs profit than formerly, afford the goods cheaper to their cuſtomers. It appears by a ſtatute of this reign [s], that goods bought for ſixteen pence would ſometimes be ſold by the merchants for three ſhillings. The commodities whoſe price has chiefly riſen, are butchers meat, fowl, and fiſh (eſpecially

[n] 11 H. 7. cap. 13.
[o] 3 H. 7. cap. 12.
[p] 4 H. 7. cap. 8.
[q] Ibid. cap. 9.
[r] 11 H. 7. cap. 22.
[s] 4 H. 7. cap. 9.

the latter), which cannot be much augmented in quantity by the increaſe of art and induſtry. The profeſſion which then abounded moſt, and was ſometimes embraced by perſons of the loweſt rank, was the church: By a clauſe of a ſtatute all clerks or ſtudents of the univerſity were forbidden to beg, without a permiſſion from the vice-chancellor [t].

One great cauſe of the low ſtate of induſtry during this period was the reſtraints put upon it; and the parliament, or rather the king (for he was the prime mover in every thing), enlarged a little ſome of theſe limitations, but not to the degree that was requiſite. A law had been enacted during the reign of Henry IV. [u], that no man could bind his ſon or daughter to an apprenticeſhip, unleſs he were poſſeſſed of twenty ſhillings a-year in land; and Henry VII. becauſe the decay of manufactures was complained of in Norwich from the want of hands, exempted that city from the penalties of the law [w]. Afterwards the whole county of Norfolk obtained a like exemption with regard to ſome branches of the woollen manufacture [x]. Theſe abſurd limitations proceeded from a deſire of promoting huſbandry, which, however, is never more effectually encouraged than by the increaſe of manufactures. For a like reaſon, the law enacted againſt incloſures, and for the keeping up of farm-houſes [y], ſcarcely deſerves the high praiſes beſtowed on it by lord Bacon. If huſbandmen underſtand agriculture, and have a ready vent for their commodities, we need not dread a diminution of the people employed in the country. All methods of ſupporting populouſneſs, except by the intereſt of the proprietors, are violent and ineffectual. During a century and a half after this period, there was a frequent renewal of laws and

[t] 11 H. 7. cap. 22.
[u] 7 H. 7. cap. 17.
[w] 11 H. 7. cap. 11.
[x] 12 H. 7. cap. 1.
[y] 4 H. 7. cap. 19.

CHAP. XXVI. 1509.

edicts againſt depopulation; whence we may infer, that none of them were ever executed. The natural courſe of improvement at laſt provided a remedy.

One check to induſtry in England was the erecting of corporations; an abuſe which is not yet entirely corrected. A law was enacted, that corporations ſhould not paſs any bye-laws without the conſent of three of the chief officers of ſtate [a]. They were prohibited from impoſing tolls at their gates [b]. The cities of Gloceſter and Worceſter had even impoſed tolls on the Severne, which were aboliſhed [a].

There is a law of this reign [c], containing a preamble, by which it appears, that the company of merchant adventurers in London had, by their own authority, debarred all the other merchants of the kingdom from trading to the great marts in the Low Countries, unleſs each trader previouſly paid them the ſum of near ſeventy pounds. It is ſurpriſing that ſuch a bye-law (if it deſerve the name) could ever be carried into execution, and that the authority of parliament ſhould be requiſite to abrogate it.

It was during this reign, on the ſecond of Auguſt 1492, a little before ſun-ſet, that Chriſtopher Columbus, a Genoeſe, ſet out from Spain on his memorable voyage for the diſcovery of the weſtern world; and a few years after Vaſquez de Gama, a Portugueſe, paſſed the Cape of Good Hope, and opened a new paſſage to the Eaſt Indies. Theſe great events were attended with important conſequences to all the nations of Europe, even to ſuch as were not immediately concerned in thoſe naval enterpriſes. The enlargement of commerce and navigation increaſed induſtry and the arts every where: The nobles diſſipated their fortunes in expenſive

[a] 19 H. 7. cap. 7.
[b] Ibid. cap. 18.
[a] Ibid. cap. 8.
[c] 12 H. 7. cap. 6.

pleaſures:

pleasures: Men of an inferior rank both acquired a share in the landed property, and created to themselves a considerable property of a new kind, in stock, commodities, art, credit, and correspondence. In some nations the privileges of the commons increased by this increase of property: In most nations the kings, finding arms to be dropped by the barons, who could no longer endure their former rude manner of life, established standing armies, and subdued the liberties of their kingdoms: But in all places the condition of the people, from the depression of the petty tyrants by whom they had formerly been oppressed rather than governed, received great improvement; and they acquired, if not entire liberty, at least the most considerable advantages of it. And as the general course of events thus tended to depress the nobles and exalt the people, Henry VII. who also embraced that system of policy, has acquired more praise than his institutions, strictly speaking, seem of themselves to deserve on account of any profound wisdom attending them. CHAP. XXVI. 1509.

It was by accident only that the king had not a considerable share in those great naval discoveries by which the present age was so much distinguished. Columbus, after meeting with many repulses from the courts of Portugal and Spain, sent his brother Bartholomew to London, in order to explain his projects to Henry, and crave his protection for the execution of them. The king invited him over to England; but his brother being taken by pirates, was detained in his voyage, and Columbus meanwhile having obtained the countenance of Isabella, was supplied with a small fleet, and happily executed his enterprise. Henry was not discouraged by this disappointment: He fitted out Sebastian Cabot, a Venetian, settled in Bristol; and sent him westwards, in 1498, in search of new countries. Cabot discovered the main land of

CHAP. XXVI. 1509.

America towards the ſixtieth degree of northern latitude: He ſailed ſouthwards along the coaſt, and diſcovered Newfoundland, and other countries; but returned to England without making any conqueſt or ſettlement. Elliot, and other merchants in Briſtol, made a like attempt in 1502 [d]. The king expended fourteen thouſand pounds in building one ſhip, called the *Great Harry* [e]. She was, properly ſpeaking, the firſt ſhip in the Engliſh navy. Before this period, when the prince wanted a fleet, he had no other expedient than hiring or preſſing ſhips from the merchants.

But though this improvement of navigation, and the diſcovery of both the Indies, was the moſt memorable incident that happened during this or any other period, it was not the only great event by which the age was diſtinguiſhed. In 1453 Conſtantinople was taken by the Turks; and the Greeks, among whom ſome remains of learning were ſtill preſerved, being ſcattered by theſe barbarians, took ſhelter in Italy, and imported, together with their admirable language, a tincture of their ſcience, and of their refined taſte in poetry and eloquence. About the ſame time the purity of the Latin tongue was revived, the ſtudy of antiquity became faſhionable, and the eſteem for literature gradually propagated itſelf throughout every nation in Europe. The art of printing, invented about that time, extremely facilitated the progreſs of all theſe improvements: The invention of gunpowder changed the whole art of war: Mighty innovations were ſoon after made in religion, ſuch as not only affected thoſe ſtates that embraced them, but even thoſe that adhered to the ancient faith and worſhip: And thus a general revolution was made in human affairs throughout this part of the world; and men gradually attained that ſituation with regard to com-

[d] Rymer, vol. xiii. p. 37. [e] Stowe, p. 484.

merce,

merce, arts, ſcience, government, police, and cultivation, in which they have ever ſince perſevered. Here, therefore, commences the uſeful, as well as the more agreeable part of modern annals; certainty has place in all the conſiderable, and even moſt of the minute parts of hiſtorical narration; a great variety of events, preſerved by printing, give the author the power of ſelecting, as well as adorning the facts which he relates; and as each incident has a reference to our preſent manners and ſituation, inſtructive leſſons occur every moment during the courſe of the narration. Whoever carries his anxious reſearches into preceding periods is moved by a curioſity, liberal indeed and commendable; not by any neceſſity for acquiring knowledge of public affairs, or the arts of civil government.

CHAP. XXVI. 1509.

CHAP. XXVII.

HENRY VIII.

Popularity of the new king——His miniſters——Puniſhment of Empſon and Dudley——King's marriage——Foreign affairs——Julius II.——*League of Cambray——War with France——Expedition to Fontarabia——Deceit of Ferdinand——Return of the Engliſh——Leo* X.——*A parliament——War with Scotland——Wolſey miniſter——His character——Invaſion of France——Battle of Guinegate——Battle of Flouden——Peace with France.*

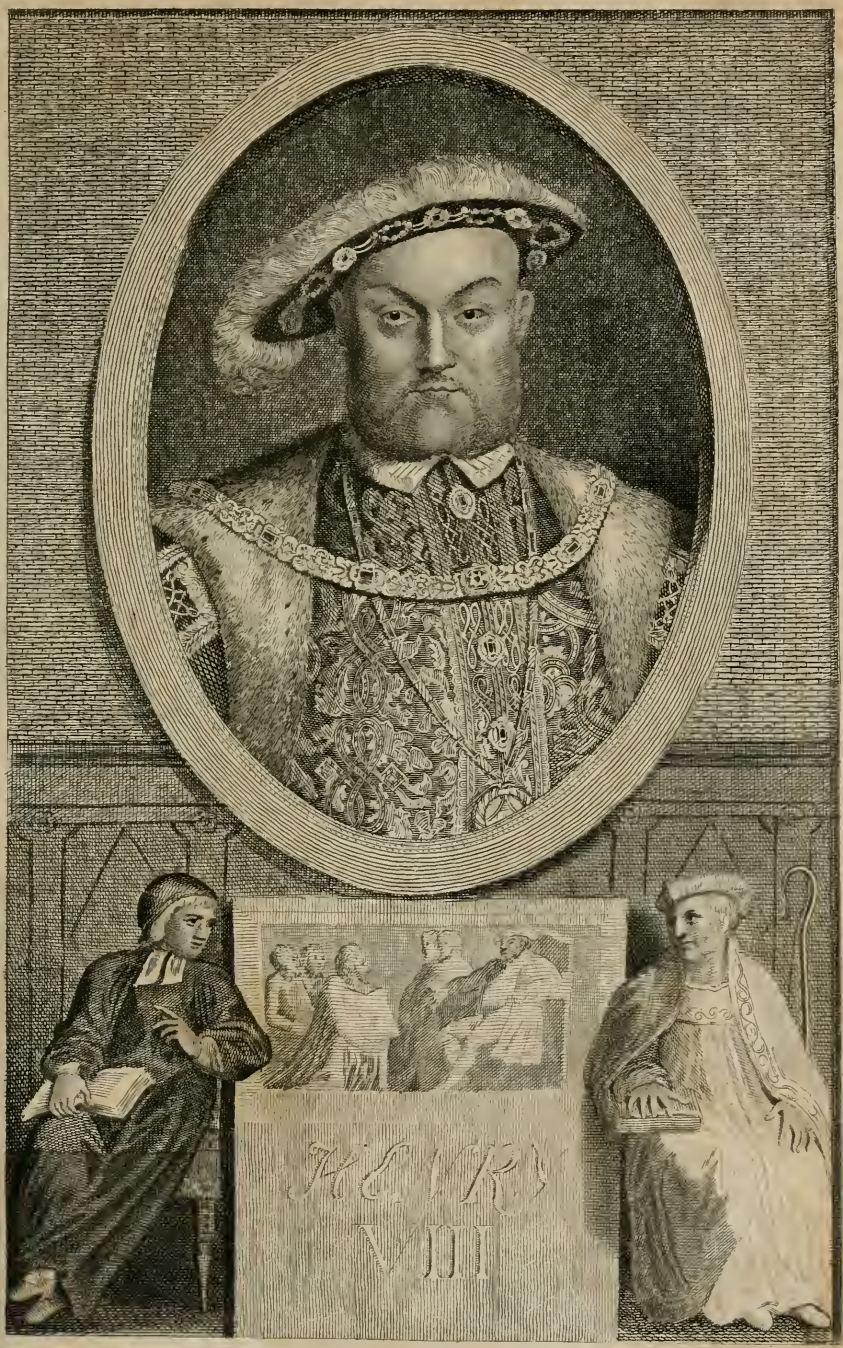
CHAP. XXVII. 1509.

THE death of Henry VII. had been attended with as open and viſible a joy among the people as decency would permit; and the acceſſion and coronation of his ſon Henry VIII. ſpread univerſally a declared and unfeigned ſatisfaction. Inſtead of a monarch jealous, ſevere, and avaricious, who, in proportion as he advanced in years, was ſinking ſtill deeper in thoſe unpopular vices, a young prince of eighteen had ſucceeded to the throne, who even in the eyes of men of ſenſe gave promiſing hopes of his future conduct, much more in thoſe of the people, always enchanted with novelty, youth, and royal dignity. The beauty and vigour of his perſon, accompanied with dexterity in every manly exerciſe, was farther adorned with a blooming and ruddy countenance, with a lively air, with the appearance of ſpirit and activity in all his demeanour[f]. His father, in order to remove him

Popularity of the new king.

[f] T. Mori Lucubr. p. 184.

from



From a Painting in the Royal Collection Kensington Palace. *Engraved by Chas. Sherwin.*

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from the knowledge of public buſineſs, had hitherto occupied him entirely in the purſuits of literature; and the proficiency which he made gave no bad prognoſtic of his parts and capacity [g]. Even the vices of vehemence, ardour, and impatience, to which he was ſubject, and which afterwards degenerated into tyranny, were conſidered only as faults incident to unguarded youth, which would be corrected when time had brought him to greater moderation and maturity. And as the contending titles of York and Lancaſter were now at laſt fully united in his perſon, men juſtly expected from a prince, obnoxious to no party, that impartiality of adminiſtration which had long been unknown in England. CHAP. XXVII. 1509.

THESE favourable prepoſſeſſions of the public were encouraged by the meaſures which Henry embraced in the commencement of his reign. His grandmother, the counteſs of Richmod and Derby, was ſtill alive; and as ſhe was a woman much celebrated for prudence and virtue, he wiſely ſhewed great deference to her opinion in the eſtabliſhment of his new council. The members were, Warham, archbiſhop of Canterbury and chancellor; the earl of Shrewſbury, ſteward; lord Herbert, chamberlain; ſir Thomas Lovel, maſter of the wards and conſtable of the Tower; ſir Edward Poynings, comptroller; ſir Henry Marney, afterwards lord Marney; ſir Thomas Darcy, afterwards lord Darcy; Thomas Ruthal, doctor of laws; and ſir Henry Wyat [h]. Theſe men had long been accuſtomed to buſineſs under the late king, and were the leaſt unpopular of all the miniſters employed by that monarch. His miniſters.

BUT the chief competitors for favour and authority under the new king were the earl of Surrey, trea-

[g] Father Paul, lib. 1.

[h] Herbert, Stowe, p. 486. Hollingſhed, p. 799.

ſurer,

CHAP. XXVII. 1509.

furer, and Fox bishop of Winchester, secretary and privy seal. This prelate, who enjoyed great credit during all the former reign, had acquired such habits of caution and frugality as he could not easily lay aside; and he still opposed, by his remonstrances, those schemes of dissipation and expence which the youth and passions of Henry rendered agreeable to him. But Surrey was a more dextrous courtier; and though few had borne a greater share in the frugal politics of the late king, he knew how to conform himself to the humour of his new master; and no one was so forward in promoting that liberality, pleasure, and magnificence, which began to prevail under the young monarch [i]. By this policy he ingratiated himself with Henry; he made advantage, as well as the other courtiers, of the lavish disposition of his master; and he engaged him in such a course of play and idleness as rendered him negligent of affairs, and willing to entrust the government of the state entirely into the hands of his ministers. The great treasures amassed by the late king were gradually dissipated in the giddy expences of Henry. One party of pleasure succeeded to another: Tilts, tournaments, and carousals, were exhibited with all the magnificence of the age: And as the present tranquillity of the public permitted the court to indulge itself in every amusement, serious business was but little attended to. Or if the king intermitted the course of his festivity, he chiefly employed himself in an application to music and literature, which were his favourite pursuits, and which were well adapted to his genius. He had made such proficiency in the former art, as even to compose some pieces of church-music which were sung in his chapel [k]. He was initiated in the elegant learning of the ancients. And though he was so unfortunate as to be seduced into a study of the barren contro-

[i] Lord Herbert. [k] Ibid.

versies

verſies of the ſchools, which were then faſhionable, and had choſen Thomas Aquinas for his favourite author, he ſtill diſcovered a capacity fitted for more uſeful and entertaining knowledge. CHAP. XXVII. 1509.

THE frank and careleſs humour of the king, as it led him to diſſipate the treaſures amaſſed by his father, rendered him negligent in protecting the inſtruments whom that prince had employed in his extortions. A proclamation being iſſued to encourage complaints, the rage of the people was let looſe on all informers, who had ſo long exerciſed an unbounded tyranny over the nation[1]: They were thrown into priſon, condemned to the pillory, and moſt of them loſt their lives by the violence of the populace. Empſon and Dudley, who were moſt expoſed to public hatred, were immediately ſummoned before the council, in order to anſwer for their conduct, which had rendered them ſo obnoxious. Empſon made a ſhrewd apology for himſelf, as well as for his aſſociate. He told the council, that ſo far from his being juſtly expoſed to cenſure for his paſt conduct, his enemies themſelves grounded their clamour on actions which ſeemed rather to merit reward and approbation: That a ſtrict execution of law was the crime of which he and Dudley were accuſed; though that law had been eſtabliſhed by general conſent, and though they had acted in obedience to the king, to whom the adminiſtration of juſtice was entruſted by the conſtitution: That it belonged not to them, who were inſtruments in the hands of ſupreme power, to determine what laws were recent or obſolete, expedient or hurtful; ſince they were all alike valid, ſo long as they remained unrepealed by the legiſlature: That it was natural for a licentious populace to murmur againſt the reſtraints of authority; but all wiſe ſtates had ever made their glory conſiſt in the juſt diſtribution of rewards and puniſhments, Puniſhment of Empſon and Dudley.

1 Herbert, Stowe, p. 486. Hollingſhed, p. 799. Polyd. Virg. lib. xxviii.

and

CHAP. XXVII. 1509.

and had annexed the former to the obſervance and enforcement of the laws, the latter to their violation and infraction: And that a ſudden overthrow of all government might be expected, where the judges were committed to the mercy of the criminals, the rulers to that of the ſubjects [m].

NOTWITHSTANDING this defence, Empſon and Dudley were ſent to the Tower; and ſoon after brought to their trial. The ſtrict execution of laws, however obſolete, could never be imputed to them as a crime in a court of judicature; and it is likely that, even where they had exerciſed arbitrary power, the king, as they had acted by the ſecret commands of his father, was not willing that their conduct ſhould undergo too ſevere a ſcrutiny. In order, therefore, to gratify the people with the puniſhment of theſe obnoxious miniſters, crimes very improbable, or indeed abſolutely impoſſible, were charged upon them; that they had entered into a conſpiracy againſt the ſovereign, and had intended, on the death of the late king, to have ſeized by force the adminiſtration of government. The jury were ſo far moved by popular prejudices, joined to court influence, as to give a verdict againſt them; which was afterwards confirmed by a bill of attainder in parliament [n], and at the earneſt deſire of the people was executed by warrant from the king. Thus, in thoſe arbitrary times, juſtice was equally violated, whether the king ſought power and riches, or courted popularity.

[m] Herbert, Hollingſhed, p. 804.

[n] This parliament met on the 21ſt January 1510. A law was there enacted, in order to prevent ſome abuſes which had prevailed during the late reign. The forfeiture upon the penal ſtatutes was reduced to the term of three years. Coſts and damages were given againſt informers upon acquittal of the accuſed: More ſevere puniſhments were enacted againſt perjury: The falſe inquiſitions procured by Empſon and Dudley were declared null and invalid. Traverſes were allowed; and the time of tendering them enlarged. 1 H. 8. c. 8. 10, 11, 12.

CHAP. XXVII.

HENRY, while he punished the instruments of past tyranny, had yet such deference to former engagements as to deliberate, immediately after his accession, concerning the celebration of his marriage with the infanta Catherine, to whom he had been affianced during his father's lifetime. Her former marriage with his brother, and the inequality of their years, were the chief objections urged against his espousing her: But on the other hand, the advantages of her known virtue, modesty, and sweetness of disposition, were insisted on; the affection which she bore to the king; the large dowry to which she was entitled as princess of Wales; the interest of cementing a close alliance with Spain; the necessity of finding some confederate to counterbalance the power of France; the expediency of fulfilling the engagements of the late king: When these considerations were weighed, they determined the council, though contrary to the opinion of the primate, to give Henry their advice for celebrating the marriage. The countess of Richmond, who had concurred in the same sentiments with the council, died soon after the marriage of her grandson.

1509. King's marriage. 3d June.

THE popularity of Henry's government, his undisputed title, his extensive authority, his large treasures, the tranquillity of his subjects, were circumstances which rendered his domestic administration easy and prosperous: The situation of foreign affairs was no less happy and desirable. Italy continued still, as during the late reign, to be the centre of all the wars and negotiations of the European princes; and Henry's alliance was courted by all parties; at the same time that he was not engaged by any immediate interest or necessity to take part with any. Lewis XII. of France, after his conquest of Milan, was the only great prince that possessed any territory in Italy; and could he have remained

Foreign affairs.

in

CHAP. XXVII. 1509.

in tranquillity, he was enabled by his ſituation to preſcribe laws to all the Italian princes and republics, and to hold the balance among them. But the deſire of making a conqueſt of Naples, to which he had the ſame title or pretenſions with his predeceſſor, ſtill engaged him in new enterpriſes; and as he foreſaw oppoſition from Ferdinand, who was connected both by treaties and affinity with Frederic of Naples, he endeavoured by the offers of intereſt, to which the ears of that monarch were ever open, to engage him in an oppoſite confederacy. He ſettled with him a plan for the partition of the kingdom of Naples, and the expulſion of Frederic: A plan which the politicians of that age regarded as the moſt egregious imprudence in the French monarch, and the greateſt perfidy in the Spaniſh. Frederic, ſupported only by ſubjects who were either diſcontented with his government, or indifferent about his fortunes, was unable to reſiſt ſo powerful a confederacy, and was deprived of his dominions: But he had the ſatisfaction to ſee Naples immediately prove the ſource of contention among his enemies. Ferdinand gave ſecret orders to his general, Gonſalvo, whom the Spaniards honour with the appellation of the *great captain*, to attack the armies of France, and make himſelf maſter of all the dominions of Naples. Gonſalvo prevailed in every enterpriſe, defeated the French in two pitched battles, and enſured to his prince the entire poſſeſſion of that kingdom. Lewis, unable to procure redreſs by force of arms, was obliged to enter into a fruitleſs negotiation with Ferdinand for the recovery of his ſhare of the partition, and all Italy during ſome time was held in ſuſpenſe between theſe two powerful monarchs.

THERE has ſcarcely been any period when the balance of power was better ſecured in Europe, and ſeemed more able to maintain itſelf without any anxious

anxious concern or attention of the princes. Several great monarchies were eſtabliſhed; and no one ſo far ſurpaſſed the reſt as to give any foundation or even pretence for jealouſy. England was united in domeſtic peace, and by its ſituation happily ſecured from the invaſion of foreigners. The coalition of the ſeveral kingdoms of Spain had formed one powerful monarchy, which Ferdinand adminiſtered with arts, fraudulent indeed and deceitful, but full of vigour and ability. Lewis XII. a gallant and generous prince, had, by eſpouſing Anne of Britanny, widow to his predeceſſor, preſerved the union with that principality, on which the ſafety of his kingdom ſo much depended. Maximilian the emperor, beſides the hereditary dominions of the Auſtrian family, maintained authority in the empire, and, notwithſtanding the levity of his character, was able to unite the German princes in any great plan of intereſt, at leaſt of defence. Charles prince of Caſtile, grandſon to Maximilian and Ferdinand, had already ſucceeded to the rich dominions of the houſe of Burgundy; and being as yet in early youth, the government was entruſted to Margaret of Savoy, his aunt, a princeſs endowed with ſignal prudence and virtue. The internal force of theſe ſeveral powerful ſtates, by balancing each other, might long have maintained general tranquillity, had not the active and enterpriſing genius of Julius II. an ambitious pontiff, firſt excited the flames of war and diſcord among them. By his intrigues, a league had been formed at Cambray[o] between himſelf, Maximilian, Lewis, and Ferdinand; and the object of this great confederacy was to overwhelm, by their united arms, the commonwealth of Venice. Henry, without any motive from intereſt or paſſion, allowed his name to be inſerted in the confederacy. This oppreſſive and

CHAP. XXVII. 1509.

Julius II.

League of Cambray.

[o] In 1508.

ini-

CHAP. XXVII.

iniquitous league was but too successful against the republic.

1509. THE great force and secure situation of the considerable monarchies prevented any one from aspiring to any conquest of moment; and though this consideration could not maintain general peace, or remedy the natural inquietude of men, it rendered the princes of this age more disposed to desert engagements, and change their alliances, in which they were retained by humour and caprice, rather than
1510. by any natural or durable interest. Julius had no sooner humbled the Venetian republic, than he was inspired with a nobler ambition, that of expelling all foreigners from Italy, or, to speak in the style affected by the Italians of that age, the freeing of that country entirely from the dominion of Barbarians [p]. He was determined to make the tempest fall first upon Lewis; and, in order to pave the way for this great enterprise, he at once sought for a ground of quarrel with the monarch, and courted the alliance of other princes. He declared war against the duke of Ferrara, the confederate of Lewis. He solicited the favour of England, by sending Henry a sacred rose, perfumed with musk, and anointed with chrism [q]. He engaged in his interests Bambridge archbishop of York, and Henry's ambassador at Rome, whom he soon after created a cardinal. He drew over Ferdinand to his party, though that monarch at first made no declaration of his intentions. And what he chiefly valued, he formed a treaty with the Swiss cantons, who, enraged by some neglects put upon them by Lewis, accompanied with contumelious expressions, had quitted the alliance of France, and waited for an opportunity of revenging themselves on that nation.

1511. WHILE the French monarch repelled the attacks of his enemies, he thought it also requisite to make an

[p] Guiccard. lib. viii. [q] Spelman, Concil. vol. ii. p. 725.

attempt

CHAP. XXVII. 1511.

attempt on the pope himself, and to despoil him as much as possible, of that sacred character which chiefly rendered him formidable. He engaged some cardinals, disgusted with the violence of Julius, to desert him; and by their authority, he was determined, in conjunction with Maximilian, who still adhered to his alliance, to call a general council, which might reform the church, and check the exorbitancies of the Roman pontiff. A council was summoned at Pisa, which from the beginning bore a very inauspicious aspect, and promised little success to its adherents. Except a few French bishops, who unwillingly obeyed their king's commands in attending the council, all the other prelates kept aloof from an assembly which they regarded as the offspring of faction, intrigue, and worldly politics. Even Pisa, the place of their residence, showed them signs of contempt; which engaged them to transfer their session to Milan, a city under the dominion of the French monarch. Notwithstanding this advantage, they did not experience much more respectful treatment from the inhabitants of Milan; and found it necessary to make another remove to Lyons[s]. Lewis himself fortified these violent prejudices in favour of papal authority, by the symptoms which he discovered, of regard, deference, and submission to Julius, whom he always spared, even when fortune had thrown into his hands the most inviting opportunities of humbling him. And as it was known, that his consort, who had great influence over him, was extremely disquieted in mind on account of his dissensions with the holy father, all men prognosticated to Julius final success in this unequal contest.

The enterprising pontiff knew his advantages, and availed himself of them with the utmost temerity and insolence. So much had he neglected his

[s] Guicciardini, lib. 10.

CHAP. XXVII.

1511. facerdotal character, that he acted in perſon at the ſiege of Mirandola, viſited the trenches, ſaw ſome of his attendants killed by his ſide, and, like a young ſoldier, cheerfully bore all the rigours of winter and a ſevere ſeaſon; in purſuit of military glory [r]: Yet was he ſtill able to throw, even on his moſt moderate opponents, the charge of impiety and prophaneneſs. He ſummoned a council at the Lateran: He put Piſa under an interdict, and all the places which gave ſhelter to the ſchiſmatical council: He excommunicated the cardinals and prelates who attended it: He even pointed his ſpiritual thunder againſt the princes who adhered to it: He freed their ſubjects from all oaths of allegiance, and gave their dominions to every one who could take poſſeſſion of them.

FERDINAND of Arragon, who had acquired the ſirname of Catholic, regarded the cauſe of the pope and of religion only as a cover to his ambition and ſelfiſh politics: Henry, naturally ſincere and ſanguine in his temper, and the more ſo on account of his youth and inexperience, was moved with a hearty deſire of protecting the pope from the oppreſſion to which he believed him expoſed from the ambitious

1512. enterpriſes of Lewis. Hopes had been given him by Julius, that the title of *Moſt Chriſtian King*, which had hitherto been annexed to the crown of France, and which was regarded as its moſt precious ornament, ſhould, in reward of his ſervices, be transferred to that of England [s]. Impatient alſo of acquiring that diſtinction in Europe to which his power and opulence entitled him, he could not long remain neuter amidſt the noiſe of arms; and the natural enmity of the Engliſh againſt France, as well as their ancient claims upon that kingdom, led Henry to join that alliance, which the pope, Spain, and Venice, had formed againſt the French mo-

[r] Guicciardini, lib. 9. [s] Guicciard. lib. 11. P. Daniel, vol. ii. p. 1893. Herbert. Hollingſhed, p. 831.

narch.

narch. A herald was sent to Paris, to exhort Lewis not to wage impious war against the sovereign pontiff; and when he returned without success, another was sent to demand the ancient patrimonial provinces, Anjou, Maine, Guienne, and Normandy. This message was understood to be a declaration of war; and a parliament being summoned, readily granted supplies for a purpose so much favoured by the English nation [t].

CHAP. XXVII. 1512.

War with France. 4th Feb.

Buonaviso, an agent of the pope's at London, had been corrupted by the court of France, and had previously revealed to Lewis all the measures which Henry was concerting against him. But this infidelity did the king inconsiderable prejudice, in comparison of the treachery which he experienced from the selfish purposes of the ally on whom he chiefly relied for assistance. Ferdinand, his father-in-law, had so long persevered in a course of crooked politics, that he began even to value himself on his dexterity in fraud and artifice; and he made a boast of those shameful successes. Being told one day, that Lewis, a prince of a very different character, had complained of his having once cheated him: "He lies, the drunkard!" said he, "I have cheated him above twenty times." This prince considered his close connexions with Henry only as the means which enabled him the better to take advantage of his want of experience. He advised him not to invade France by the way of Calais, where he himself should not have it in his power to assist him: He exhorted him rather to send forces to Fontarabia, whence he could easily make a conquest of Guienne, a province in which it was imagined the English had still some adherents. He promised to assist this conquest by the junction of a Spanish army. And so forward did he seem to promote the interests of his son-in-law, that he even sent vessels to England,

Expedition to Fontarabia.

[t] Herbert. Hollingshed, p. 811.

CHAP. XXVII. 1512.

in order to transport over the forces which Henry had levied for that purpose. The marquis of Dorset commanded this armament, which consisted of ten thousand men, mostly infantry; lord Howard son of the earl of Surrey, lord Broke, lord Ferrars, and many others of the young gentry and nobility, accompanied him in this service. All were on fire to distinguish themselves by military atchievements, and to make a conquest of importance for their master. The secret purpose of Ferdinand, in this unexampled generosity, was suspected by nobody.

The small kingdom of Navarre lies on the frontiers between France and Spain; and as John d'Albret the sovereign was connected by friendship and alliance with Lewis, the opportunity seemed favourable to Ferdinand, while the English forces were conjoined with his own, and while all adherents to the council of Pisa lay under the sentence of excommunication, to put himself in possession of these dominions. No sooner, therefore, was Dorset landed in Guipiscoa, than the Spanish monarch declared his readiness to join him with his forces, to make with united arms an invasion of France, and to form the siege of Bayonne, which opened the way into Guienne[u]: But he remarked to the English general, how dangerous it might prove to leave behind them the kingdom of Navarre, which, being in close alliance with France, could easily give admittance to the enemy, and cut off all communication between Spain and the combined armies. To provide against so dangerous an event, he required, that John should stipulate a neutrality in the present war; and when that prince expressed his willingness to enter into any engagement for that purpose, he also required, that security should be given for the strict observance of it. John having likewise agreed to this condition, Ferdinand de-

[u] Herbert. Hollingshed, p. 813.

manded,

manded, that he ſhould deliver into his hands ſix of the moſt conſiderable places of his dominions, together with his eldeſt ſon as a hoſtage. Theſe were not terms to be propoſed to a ſovereign; and as the Spaniſh monarch expected a refuſal, he gave immediate orders to the duke of Alva, his general, to make an invaſion on Navarre, and to reduce that kingdom. Alva ſoon made himſelf maſter of all the ſmaller towns; and being ready to form the ſiege of Pampeluna, the capital, he ſummoned the marquis of Dorſet to join him with the Engliſh army, and concert together all their operations. CHAP. XXVII. 1512.

Dorset began to ſuſpect, that the intereſts of his maſter were very little regarded in all theſe tranſactions; and having no orders to invade the kingdom of Navarre, or make war any where but in France, he refuſed to take any part in the enterpriſe. He remained therefore in his quarters at Fontarabia; but ſo ſubtle was the contrivance of Ferdinand, that, even while the Engliſh army lay in that ſituation, it was almoſt equally ſerviceable to his purpoſe, as if it had acted in conjunction with his own. It kept the French army in awe, and prevented it from advancing to ſuccour the kingdom of Navarre; ſo that Alva, having full leiſure to conduct the ſiege, made himſelf maſter of Pampeluna, and obliged John to ſeek for ſhelter in France. The Spaniſh general applied again to Dorſet, and propoſed to conduct with united counſels the operations of the *holy league*, ſo it was called, againſt Lewis: But as he ſtill declined forming the ſiege of Bayonne, and rather inſiſted on the invaſion of the principality of Bearne, a part of the king of Navarre's dominions, which lies on the French ſide of the Pyrenees, Dorſet, juſtly ſuſpicious of his ſiniſter intentions, repreſented, that, without new orders from his maſter, he could not concur in ſuch an undertaking. In order to procure theſe orders, Deceit of Ferdinand.

CHAP. XXVII. 1512.

Ferdinand dispatched Martin de Ampios to London; and persuaded Henry, that, by the refractory and scrupulous humour of the English general, the most favourable opportunities were lost, and that it was necessary he should, on all occasions, act in concert with the Spanish commander, who was best acquainted with the situation of the country, and the reasons of every operation. But before orders to this purpose reached Spain, Dorset had become extremely impatient; and observing that his farther stay served not to promote the main undertaking, and that his army was daily perishing by want and sickness, he demanded shipping from Ferdinand to transport them back into England. Ferdinand, who was bound by treaty to furnish him with this supply, whenever demanded, was at length, after many delays, obliged to yield to his importunity; and Dorset, embarking his troops, prepared himself for the voyage. Meanwhile, the messenger arrived with orders from Henry, that the troops should remain in Spain; but the soldiers were so discontented with the treatment which they had met with, that they mutinied, and obliged their commanders to set sail for England. Henry was much displeased with the ill success of this enterprise; and it was with difficulty that Dorset, by explaining the fraudulent conduct of Ferdinand, was at last able to appease him.

Return of the English.

There happened this summer an action at sea, which brought not any more decisive advantage to the English. Sir Thomas Knevet, master of horse, was sent to the coast of Britanny with a fleet of forty-five sail; and he carried with him sir Charles Brandon, sir John Carew, and many other young courtiers, who longed for an opportunity of displaying their valour. After they had committed some depredations, a French fleet of thirty-nine sail issued from Brest, under the command of Primauget, and

began an engagement with the Engliſh. Fire ſeized the ſhip of Primauget, who, finding his deſtruction inevitable, bore down upon the veſſel of the Engliſh admiral, and grappling with her, reſolved to make her ſhare his fate. Both fleets ſtood ſome time in ſuſpenſe, as ſpectators of this dreadful engagement; and all men ſaw with horror the flames which conſumed both veſſels, and heard the cries of fury and deſpair, which came from the miſerable combatants. At laſt, the French veſſel blew up; and at the ſame time deſtroyed the Engliſh [x]. The reſt of the French fleet made their eſcape into different harbours. CHAP. XXVII. 1512.

THE war which England waged againſt France, though it brought no advantage to the former kingdom, was of great prejudice to the latter; and by obliging Lewis to withdraw his forces for the defence of his own dominions, loſt him that ſuperiority, which his arms, in the beginning of the campaign, had attained in Italy. Gaſton de Foix, his nephew, a young hero, had been entruſted with the command of the French forces; and in a few months performed ſuch feats of military art and proweſs, as were ſufficient to render illuſtrious the life of the oldeſt captain [y]. His career finiſhed with the great battle of Ravenna, which, after the moſt obſtinate conflict, he gained over the Spaniſh and papal armies. He periſhed the very moment his victory was complete; and with him periſhed the fortune of the French arms in Italy. The Swiſs, who had rendered themſelves extremely formidable by their bands of diſciplined infantry, invaded the Milaneſe with a numerous army, and raiſed up that inconſtant people to a revolt againſt the dominion of France. Genoa followed the example of the dutchy; and thus Lewis, in a few weeks, entirely loſt

[x] Polydore Virgil, lib. 27. Stowe, p. 490. Lanquet's Epitome of Chronicles, fol. 273. [y] Guicciard. lib. 10.

CHAP. XXVII. 1513.

his Italian conquests, except some garrisons; and Maximilian Sforza, the son of Ludovic, was reinstated in possession of Milan.

JULIUS discovered extreme joy on the discomfiture of the French; and the more so, as he had been beholden for it to the Swiss, a people whose councils, he hoped, he should always be able to influence and govern. The pontiff survived this success a very little time; and in his place was chosen John de Medicis, who took the appellation of Leo X. and proved one of the most illustrious princes that ever sat on the papal throne. Humane, beneficent, generous, affable; the patron of every art, and friend of every virtue [z]; he had a soul no less capable of forming great designs than his predecessor, but was more gentle, pliant, and artful in employing means for the execution of them. The sole defect, indeed, of his character was too great finesse and artifice; a fault which, both as a priest and an Italian, it was difficult for him to avoid. By the negotiations of Leo, the emperor Maximilian was detached from the French interest; and Henry, notwithstanding his disappointments in the former campaign, was still encouraged to prosecute his warlike measures against Lewis.

11th Feb. Leo X.

A parliament.

HENRY had summoned a new session of parliament [a], and obtained a supply for his enterprise. It was a poll-tax, and imposed different sums, according to the station and riches of the person. A duke payed ten marks, an earl five pounds, a baron four pounds, a knight four marks; every man valued at eight hundred pounds in goods, four marks. An imposition was also granted of two fifteenths and four tenths [b]. By these supplies, joined to the treasure which had been left by his father, and which was not yet entirely dissipated, he was enabled to

[z] Father Paul, lib. 1.
[a] 4th November, 1512.
[b] Stowe.

levy

levy a great army, and render himself formidable to his enemy. The English are said to have been much encouraged in this enterprise, by the arrival of a vessel in the Thames under the papal banner. It carried presents of wine and hams to the king, and the more eminent courtiers; and such fond devotion was at that time entertained towards the court of Rome, that these trivial presents were every where received with the greatest triumph and exultation. CHAP. XXVII. 1513.

In order to prevent all disturbances from Scotland, while Henry's arms should be employed on the continent, Dr. West, dean of Windsor, was dispatched on an embassy to James, the king's brother-in-law; and instructions were given him to accommodate all differences between the kingdoms, as well as to discover the intentions of the court of Scotland [c]. Some complaints had already been made on both sides. One Barton, a Scotchman, having suffered injuries from the Portuguese, for which he could obtain no redress, had procured letters of marque against that nation; but he had no sooner put to sea, than he was guilty of the grossest abuses, committed depredations upon the English, and much infested the narrow seas [d]. Lord Howard and sir Edward Howard, admirals, and sons of the earl of Surrey, sailing out against him, fought him in a desperate action, where the pirate was killed; and they brought his ships into the Thames. As Henry refused all satisfaction for this act of justice, some of the borderers, who wanted but a pretence for depredations, entered England under the command of lord Hume, warden of the marches, and committed great ravages on that kingdom. Notwithstanding these mutual grounds of dissatisfaction, matters might easily have been accommodated,

[c] Polydore Virgil, lib. 27.

[d] Stowe, p. 489. Hollingshed, p. 811.

had

CHAP. XXVII.

1513. War with Scotland.

had it not been for Henry's intended invaſion of France, which rouſed the jealouſy of the Scottiſh nation[e]. The ancient league, which ſubſiſted between France and Scotland, was conceived to be the ſtrongeſt band of connexion; and the Scots univerſally believed, that, were it not for the countenance which they received from this foreign alliance, they had never been able ſo long to maintain their independence againſt a people ſo much ſuperior. James was farther incited to take part in the quarrel by the invitations of Anne, queen of France, whoſe knight he had ever in all tournaments profeſſed himſelf, and who ſummoned him, according to the ideas of romantic gallantry prevalent in that age, to take the field in her defence, and prove himſelf her true and valorous champion. The remonſtrances of his concert and of his wiſeſt counſellors were in vain oppoſed to the martial ardour of this prince. He firſt ſent a ſquadron of ſhips to the aſſiſtance of France; the only fleet which Scotland ſeems ever to have poſſeſſed. And though he ſtill made profeſſions of maintaining a neutrality, the Engliſh ambaſſador eaſily foreſaw, that a war would in the end prove inevitable; and he gave warning of the danger to his maſter, who ſent the earl of Surrey to put the borders in a poſture of defence, and to reſiſt the expected invaſion of the enemy.

HENRY, all on fire for military fame, was little diſcouraged by this appearance of a diverſion from the north; and ſo much the leſs, as he flattered himſelf with the aſſiſtance of all the conſiderable potentates of Europe in his invaſion of France. The pope ſtill continued to thunder out his excommunications againſt Lewis, and all the adherents of the ſchiſmatical council: The Swiſs cantons made pro-

[e] Buchanan, lib. 13. Drummond in the life of James IV.

CHAP. XXVII. 1513.

fessions of violent animosity against France: The ambassadors of Ferdinand and Maximilian had signed with those of Henry a treaty of alliance against that power, and had stipulated the time and place of their intended invasion: And though Ferdinand disavowed his ambassador, and even signed a truce for a twelvemonth with the common enemy; Henry was not yet fully convinced of his selfish and sinister intentions, and still hoped for his concurrence after the expiration of that term. He had now got a minister who complied with all his inclinations, and flattered him in every scheme to which his sanguine and impetuous temper was inclined.

Wolsey minister.

THOMAS WOLSEY, dean of Lincoln, and almoner to the king, surpassed in favour all his ministers, and was fast advancing towards that unrivalled grandeur which he afterwards attained. This man was son of a butcher at Ipswich; but having got a learned education, and being endowed with an excellent capacity, he was admitted into the marquis of Dorset's family as tutor to that nobleman's children, and soon gained the friendship and countenance of his patron [f]. He was recommended to be chaplain to Henry VII. and being employed by that monarch in a secret negotiation, which regarded his intended marriage with Margaret of Savoy, Maximilian's daughter, he acquitted himself to the king's satisfaction, and obtained the praise both of diligence and dexterity in his conduct [g]. That prince, having given him a commission to Maximilian, who at that time resided in Brussels, was surprised in less than three days after, to see Wolsey present himself before him; and supposing that he had protracted his departure, he began to reprove him for the dilatory execution of his orders. Wolsey informed

[f] Stowe, p. 997.

[g] Cavendish. Fiddes's life of Wolsey. Stowe.

him,

CHAP. XXVII. 1513.

him, that he had juſt returned from Bruſſels, and had ſucceſsfully fulfilled all his majeſty's commands. "But on ſecond thoughts," ſaid the king, "I found that ſomewhat was omitted in your "orders; and have ſent a meſſenger after you with "fuller inſtructions." "I met the meſſenger," replied Wolſey, "on my return: But as I had re-"flected on that omiſſion, I ventured of myſelf to "execute what, I knew, muſt be your majeſty's "intentions." The death of Henry, ſoon after this incident, retarded the advancement of Wolſey, and prevented his reaping any advantage from the good opinion which that monarch had entertained of him: But thenceforwards he was looked on at court as a riſing man; and Fox biſhop of Winchester caſt his eye upon him as one who might be ſerviceable to him in his preſent ſituation [h]. This prelate, obſerving that the earl of Surrey had totally eclipſed him in favour, reſolved to introduce Wolſey to the young prince's familiarity, and hoped that he might rival Surrey in his inſinuating arts, and yet be contented to act in the cabinet a part ſubordinate to Fox himſelf, who had promoted him. In a little time Wolſey gained ſo much on the king, that he ſupplanted both Surrey in his favour, and Fox in his truſt and confidence. Being admitted to Henry's parties of pleaſure, he took the lead in every jovial converſation, and promoted all that frolic and entertainment which he found ſuitable to the age and inclination of the young monarch. Neither his own years, which were near forty, nor his character of a clergyman, were any reſtraint upon him, or engaged him to check, by any uſeleſs ſeverity, the gaiety, in which Henry, who had ſmall propenſion to debauchery, paſſed his careleſs hours. During the intervals of amuſement he introduced

[h] Antiq. Brit. Eccleſ. p. 309. Polydore Virgil, lib. 27.

buſineſs,

CHAP. XXVII. 1513.

buſineſs, and inſinuated thoſe maxims of conduct which he was deſirous his maſter ſhould adopt. He obſerved to him, that, while he entruſted his affairs into the hands of his father's counſellors, he had the advantage indeed of employing men of wiſdom and experience, but men who owed not their promotion to his favour, and who ſcarcely thought themſelves accountable to him for the exerciſe of their authority: That by the factions, and cabals, and jealouſies, which had long prevailed among them, they more obſtructed the advancement of his affairs, than they promoted it by the knowledge which age and practice had conferred upon them: That while he thought proper to paſs his time in thoſe pleaſures, to which his age and royal fortune invited him, and in thoſe ſtudies, which would in time enable him to ſway the ſceptre with abſolute authority, his beſt ſyſtem of government would be to entruſt his authority into the hands of ſome one perſon, who was the creature of his will, and who could entertain no view but that of promoting his ſervice: And that if this miniſter had alſo the ſame reliſh for pleaſure with himſelf, and the ſame taſte for ſcience, he could more eaſily, at intervals, account to him for his whole conduct, and introduce his maſter gradually into the knowledge of public buſineſs; and thus, without tedious conſtraint or application, initiate him in the ſcience of government[1].

HENRY entered into all the views of WOLSEY; and finding no one ſo capable of executing this plan of adminiſtration as the perſon who propoſed it, he ſoon advanced his favourite, from being the companion of his pleaſures, to be a member of his council; and from being a member of his council, to be his ſole and abſolute miniſter. By this rapid

[1] Cavendiſh, p. 12. Stowe, p. 499.

advance-

CHAP. XXVII.

1513. His character.

advancement and uncontrolled authority, the character and genius of Wolsey had full opportunity to display itself. Insatiable in his acquisitions, but still more magnificent in his expence: Of extensive capacity, but still more unbounded enterprise: Ambitious of power, but still more desirous of glory: Insinuating, engaging, persuasive; and, by turns, lofty, elevated, commanding: Haughty to his equals, but affable to his dependants; oppressive to the people, but liberal to his friends; more generous than grateful; less moved by injuries than by contempt; he was framed to take the ascendant in every intercourse with others, but exerted this superiority of *nature* with such ostentation as exposed him to envy, and made every one willing to recal the original inferiority, or rather meanness of his *fortune*.

The branch of administration in which Henry most exerted himself, while he gave his entire confidence to Wolsey, was the military, which, as it suited the natural gallantry and bravery of his temper, as well as the ardour of his youth, was the principal object of his attention. Finding that Lewis had made great preparations both by sea and land to resist him, he was no less careful to levy a formidable army, and equip a considerable fleet for the invasion of France. The command of the fleet was entrusted to sir Edward Howard; who, after scouring the channel for some time, presented himself before Brest, where the French navy then lay; and he challenged them to a combat. The French admiral, who expected from the Mediterranean a reinforcement of some gallies under the command of Prejeant de Bidoux, kept within the harbour, and saw with patience the English burn and destroy the country in the neighbourhood. At last Prejeant arrived with six gallies, and put into Conquet, a place within a few leagues of Brest;

where

where he secured himself behind some batteries, which he had planted on rocks that lay on each side of him. Howard was, notwithstanding, determined to make an attack upon him; and as he had but two gallies, he took himself the command of one, and gave the other to lord Ferrars. He was followed by some row-barges and some crayers under the command of sir Thomas Cheyney, sir William Sidney, and other officers of distinction. He immediately fastened on Prejeant's ship, and leaped on board of her, attended by one Carroz, a Spanish cavalier, and seventeen Englishmen. The cable, meanwhile, which fastened his ship to that of the enemy, being cut, the admiral was thus left in the hands of the French; and as he still continued the combat with great gallantry, he was pushed overboard by their pikes[k]. Lord Ferrars, seeing the admiral's galley fall off, followed with the other small vessels; and the whole fleet was so discouraged by the loss of their commander, that they retired from before Brest[l]. The French navy came out of harbour; and even ventured to invade the coast of Sussex. They were repulsed, and Prejeant, their commander, lost an eye by the shot of an arrow. Lord Howard, brother to the deceased admiral, succeeded to the command of the English fleet; and little memorable passed at sea during this summer. CHAP. XXVII. 1513. April 25.

GREAT preparations had been making at land, during the whole winter, for an invasion on France by the way of Calais; but the summer was well ad-

[k] It was a maxim of Howard's, that no admiral was good for any thing, that was not even brave to a degree of madness. As the sea-service requires much less plan and contrivance and capacity than the land, this maxim has great plausibility and appearance of truth: Though the fate of Howard himself may serve as a proof, that even there courage ought to be tempered with discretion.

[l] Stowe, p. 491. Herbert, Hollingshed, p. 816.

vanced

CHAP. XXVII. 1513.

vanced before every thing was in ſufficient readineſs for the intended enterpriſe. The long peace which the kingdom had enjoyed, had ſomewhat unfitted the Engliſh for military expeditions; and the great change which had lately been introduced in the art of war, had rendered it ſtill more difficult to enure them to the uſe of the weapons now employed in action. The Swiſs, and after them the Spaniards, had ſhown the advantage of a ſtable infantry, who fought with pike and ſword, and were able to repulſe even the heavy-armed cavalry, in which the great force of the armies formerly conſiſted. The practice of fire-arms was become common; though the caliver, which was the weapon now in uſe, was ſo inconvenient, and attended with ſo many diſadvantages, that it had not entirely diſcredited the bow, a weapon in which the Engliſh excelled all European nations. A conſiderable part of the forces, which Henry levied for the invaſion of France, conſiſted of archers; and as ſoon as affairs were in readineſs, the vanguard of the army, amounting to 8000 men, under the command of the earl of Shrewſbury, ſailed over to Calais. Shrewſbury was accompanied by the earl of Derby, the lords Fitzwater, Haſtings, Cobham, and ſir Rice ap Thomas, captain of the light horſe. Another body of 6000 men ſoon after followed under the command of lord Herbert the chamberlain, attended by the earls of Northumberland and Kent, the lords Audley and Delawar, together with Carew, Curſon, and other gentlemen.

The king himſelf prepared to follow with the main body and rear of the army; and he appointed the queen regent of the kingdom during his abſence. That he might ſecure her adminiſtration from all diſturbance, he ordered Edmond de la Pole, earl of Suffolk, to be beheaded in the Tower, the nobleman who had been attainted and impriſoned

during the late reign. Henry was led to commit this act of violence by the dying commands, as is imagined, of his father, who told him, that he never would be free from danger, while a man of so turbulent a disposition as Suffolk was alive. And as Richard de la Pole, brother of Suffolk, had accepted of a command in the French service, and foolishly attempted to revive the York faction, and to instigate them against the present government, he probably, by that means, drew more suddenly the king's vengeance on this unhappy nobleman. CHAP. XXVII. 1513.

At last Henry, attended by the duke of Buckingham, and many others of the nobility, arrived at Calais, and entered upon his French expedition, from which he fondly expected so much success and glory [m]. Of all those allies on whose assistance he relied, the Swiss alone fully performed their engagements. Being put in motion by a sum of money sent them by Henry, and incited by their victories obtained in Italy, and by their animosity against France, they were preparing to enter that kingdom with an army of twenty-five thousand men; and no equal force could be opposed to their incursion. Maximilian had received an advance of 120,000 crowns from Henry, and had promised to reinforce the Swiss with 8000 men; but failed in his engagements. That he might make atonement to the king, he himself appeared in the Low Countries, and joined the English army with some German and Flemish soldiers, who were useful in giving an example of discipline to Henry's new levied forces. Observing the disposition of the English monarch to be more bent on glory than on interest, he inlisted himself in his service, wore the cross of St. George, and received pay, a hundred crowns a-day, as one of his subjects and captains. But 30th June. Invasion of France.

[m] Polyd. Virg. lib. 27. Belcarius, lib. 14.

CHAP. XXVII. 1513.

while he exhibited this extraordinary ſpectacle, of an emperor of Germany ſerving under a king of England, he was treated with the higheſt reſpect by Henry, and really directed all the operations of the Engliſh army.

BEFORE the arrival of Henry and Maximilian in the camp, the earl of Shrewſbury and lord Herbert had formed the ſiege of Terouane, a town ſituated on the frontiers of Picardy; and they began to attack the place with vigour. Teligni and Crequi commanded in the town, and had a garriſon not exceeding two thouſand men; yet made they ſuch ſtout reſiſtance as protracted the ſiege a month; and they at laſt found themſelves more in danger from want of proviſions and ammunition, than from the aſſaults of the beſiegers. Having conveyed intelligence of their ſituation to Lewis, who had advanced to Amiens with his army, that prince gave
16th Aug. orders to throw relief into the place. Fontrailles appeared at the head of 800 horſemen, each of whom carried a ſack of gunpowder behind him, and two quarters of bacon. With this ſmall force he made a ſudden and unexpected irruption into the Engliſh camp, and, ſurmounting all reſiſtance, advanced to the foſſee of the town, where each horſeman threw down his burden. They immediately returned at the gallop, and were ſo fortunate as again to break through the Engliſh, and to ſuffer little or no loſs in this dangerous attempt [n].

Battle of Guinegate.

BUT the Engliſh had, ſoon after, full revenge for the inſult. Henry had received intelligence of the approach of the French horſe, who had advanced to protect another incurſion of Fontrailles; and he ordered ſome troops to paſs the Lis, in order to oppoſe them. The cavalry of France, though they conſiſted chiefly of gentlemen who had

[n] Hiſt de Chev. Bayard, chap. 57. Memoires de Bellai.

behaved

behaved with great gallantry in many desperate actions in Italy, were, on sight of the enemy, seized with so unaccountable a panic, that they immediately took to flight, and were pursued by the English. The duke of Longueville, who commanded the French, Bussi d'Amboise, Clermont, Imbercourt, the chevalier Bayard, and many other officers of distinction, were made prisoners [o]. This action, or rather rout, is sometimes called the battle of Guinegate, from the place where it was fought; but more commonly the *Battle of Spurs*, because the French, that day, made more use of their spurs than of their swords or military weapons. CHAP. XXVII. 1513.

After so considerable an advantage, the king, who was at the head of a complete army of above 50,000 men, might have made incursions to the gates of Paris, and spread confusion and desolation every where. It gave Lewis great joy, when he heard that the English, instead of pushing their victory, and attacking the dismayed troops of France, returned to the siege of so inconsiderable a place as Teroüane. The governors were obliged, soon after, to capitulate; and Henry found his acquisition of so little moment, though gained at the expence of some blood, and what, in his present circumstances, was more important, of much valuable time, that he immediately demolished the fortifications. The anxieties of the French were again revived with regard to the motions of the English. The Swiss, at the same time, had entered Burgundy with a formidable army, and laid siege to Dijon, which was in no condition to resist them. Ferdinand himself, though he had made a truce with Lewis, seemed disposed to lay hold of every advantage which fortune should present to him. Scarcely ever was the French monarchy in greater danger,

[o] Memoires de Bellai, liv. i. Polydore Virgil, liv. 27. Hollingshed, p. 822. Herbert.

CHAP. XXVII. 1513.

or leſs in a condition to defend itſelf againſt thoſe powerful armies, which on every ſide aſſailed or threatened it. Even many of the inhabitants of Paris, who believed themſelves expoſed to the rapacity and violence of the enemy, began to diſlodge, without knowing what place could afford them greater ſecurity.

But Lewis was extricated from his preſent difficulties by the manifold blunders of his enemies. The Swiſs allowed themſelves to be ſeduced into a negociation by Tremoille, governor of Burgundy; and, without making enquiry whether that nobleman had any powers to treat, they accepted of the conditions which he offered them. Tremoille, who knew that he ſhould be diſavowed by his maſter, ſtipulated whatever they were pleaſed to demand; and thought himſelf happy, at the expence of ſome payments and very large promiſes, to get rid of ſo formidable an enemy [p].

The meaſures of Henry ſhowed equal ignorance in the art of war with that of the Swiſs in negociation. Tournay was a great and rich city, which, though it lay within the frontiers of Flanders, belonged to France, and afforded the troops of that kingdom a paſſage into the heart of the Netherlands. Maximilian, who was deſirous of freeing his grandſon from ſo troubleſome a neighbour, adviſed Henry to lay ſiege to the place; and the Engliſh monarch, not conſidering that ſuch an acquiſition nowiſe advanced his conqueſts in France, was ſo imprudent as to follow this intereſted counſel. The city of Tournay, by its ancient charters, being exempted from the burden of a garriſon, the burghers, againſt the remonſtrance of their ſovereign, ſtrenuouſly inſiſted on maintaining this dangerous privilege; and they engaged, by themſelves, to make a vigorous defence againſt the enemy [q]. Their cou-

[p] Memoires du Mareſchal de Fleuranges, Bellarius, lib. 14.

[q] Memoires de Fleuranges.

rage

CHAP. XXVII.

rage failed them when matters came to a trial; and, after a few days siege, the place was surrendered to the English. The bishop of Tournay was lately dead; and, as a new bishop was already elected by the chapter, but not installed in his office, the king bestowed the administration of the see on his favourite, Wolsey, and put him in immediate possession of the revenues, which were considerable[r]. Hearing of the retreat of the Swiss, and observing the season to be far advanced, he thought proper to return to England; and he carried the greater part of his army with him. Success had attended him in every enterprise; and his youthful mind was much elated with this seeming prosperity; but all men of judgment, comparing the advantages of his situation with his progress, his expence with his acquisitions, were convinced that this campaign, so much vaunted, was in reality both ruinous and inglorious to him[s]. 1513. 24th Sept.

The success which, during this summer, had attended Henry's arms in the North, was much more decisive. The king of Scotland had assembled the whole force of his kingdom; and, having passed the Tweed with a brave, though a tumultuary army of above 50,000 men, he ravaged those parts of Northumberland which lay nearest that river, and he employed himself in taking the castles of Norham, Etal, Werke, Ford, and other places of small importance. Lady Ford, being taken prisoner in her castle, was presented to James, and so gained on the affections of the prince, that he wasted in pleasure the critical time which, during the absence of his enemy, he should have employed in pushing his conquests. His troops, lying in a barren country, where they soon consumed all the provisions, began to be pinched with hunger; and, as the authority of the prince was feeble, and military disci-

[r] Strype's Memorials, vol. i. p. 5, 6. [s] Guicciardini.

CHAP. XXVII.

1513.

pline, during that age, extremely relaxed, many of them had ſtolen from the camp, and retired homewards. Meanwhile the earl of Surrey, having collected a force of 26,000 men, of which 5000 had been ſent over from the king's army in France, marched to the defence of the country, and approached the Scots, who lay on ſome high ground near the hills of Cheviot. The river Till ran between the armies, and prevented an engagement: Surrey, therefore, ſent a herald to the Scottiſh camp, challenging the enemy to deſcend into the plain of Milfield, which lay towards the ſouth; and there, appointing a day for the combat, to try their valour on equal ground. As he received no ſatisfactory anſwer, he made a feint of marching towards Berwic; as if he intended to enter Scotland, to lay waſte the borders, and cut off the proviſions of the enemy. The Scottiſh army, in order to prevent his purpoſe, put themſelves in motion; and having ſet fire to the huts in which they had quartered, they deſcended from the hills. Surrey, taking advantage of the ſmoke, which was blown towards him, and which concealed his movements, paſſed the Till with his artillery and vanguard at the bridge of Twiſel, and ſent the reſt of his army to ſeek a ford higher up the river.

9th Sept.

An engagement was now become inevitable, and both ſides prepared for it with tranquillity and order[t]. The Engliſh divided their army into two lines: Lord Howard led the main body of the firſt line, ſir Edmond Howard the right wing, ſir Marmaduke Conſtable the left. The earl of Surrey, himſelf, commanded the main body of the ſecond line, lord Dacres the right wing, ſir Edward Stanley the left.

Battle of Flouden.

The front of the Scots preſented three diviſions to the enemy: The middle was led by the king himſelf: The right by the earl of Huntley, aſſiſted by

[t] Buchanan, lib. 13. Drummond. Herbert. Polydore Virgil, lib. 27. Stowe, p. 493. Paulus Jovius.

lord

lord Hume: The left by the earls of Lenox and Argyle. A fourth diviſion, under the earl of Bothwel, made a body of reſerve. Huntley began the battle; and after a ſharp conflict put to flight the left wing of the Engliſh, and chaſed them off the field: But, on returning from the purſuit, he found the whole Scottiſh army in great diſorder. The diviſion under Lenox and Argyle, elated with the ſucceſs of the other wing, had broken their ranks, and, notwithſtanding the remonſtrances and entreaties of La Motte, the French ambaſſador, had ruſhed headlong upon the enemy. Not only ſir Edmond Howard, at the head of his diviſion, received them with great valour; but Dacres, who commanded in the ſecond line, wheeling about during the action, fell upon their rear, and put them to the ſword without reſiſtance. The diviſion under James, and that under Bothwel, animated by the valour of their leaders, ſtill made head againſt the Engliſh, and, throwing themſelves into a circle, protracted the action, till night ſeparated the combatants. The victory ſeemed yet undecided, and the numbers that fell on each ſide were nearly equal, amounting to above 5000 men: But the morning diſcovered where the advantage lay. The Engliſh had loſt only perſons of ſmall note; but the flower of the Scottiſh nobility had fallen in battle, and their king himſelf, after the moſt diligent enquiry, could no where be found. In ſearching the field, the Engliſh met with a dead body which reſembled him, and was arrayed in a ſimilar habit; and they put it in a leaden coffin and ſent it to London. During ſome time it was kept unburied; becauſe James died under ſentence of excommunication, on account of his confederacy with France, and his oppoſition to the holy ſee[u]: But, upon Henry's application, who pretended that this prince had, in

CHAP. XXVII. 1513.

[u] Buchanan, lib. 13. Herbert.

CHAP. XXVII.

1513. the inſtant before his death, diſcovered ſigns of repentance, abſolution was given him, and his body was interred. The Scots, however, ſtill aſſerted that it was not James's body which was found on the field of battle, but that of one Elphinſton, who had been arrayed in arms reſembling their king's, in order to divide the attention of the Engliſh, and ſhare the danger with his maſter. It was believed that James had been ſeen croſſing the Tweed at Kelſo; and ſome imagined that he had been killed by the vaſſals of lord Hume, whom that nobleman had inſtigated to commit ſo enormous a crime. But the populace entertained the opinion that he was ſtill alive, and, having ſecretly gone in pilgrimage to the Holy Land, would ſoon return and take poſſeſſion of the throne. This fond conceit was long entertained among the Scots.

THE king of Scotland and moſt of his chief nobles being ſlain in the field of Flouden, ſo this battle was called, an inviting opportunity was offered to Henry of gaining advantages over that kingdom, perhaps of reducing it to ſubjection. But he diſcovered, on this occaſion, a mind truly great and generous. When the queen of Scotland, Margaret, who was created regent during the infancy of her ſon, applied for peace, he readily granted it; and took compaſſion of the helpleſs condition of his ſiſter and nephew. The earl of Surrey, who had gained

1514. him ſo great a victory, was reſtored to the title of duke of Norfolk, which had been forfeited by his father for engaging on the ſide of Richard III. Lord Howard was honoured with the title of earl of Surrey. Sir Charles Brandon, the king's favourite, whom he had before created viſcount Liſle, was now raiſed to the dignity of duke of Suffolk. Wolſey, who was both his favourite and his miniſter, was created biſhop of Lincoln. Lord Herbert obtained the title of earl of Worceſter. Sir Edward Stanley that of lord Monteagle.

THOUGH

CHAP. XXVII. 1514.

THOUGH peace with Scotland gave Henry security on that side, and enabled him to prosecute, in tranquillity, his enterprise against France, some other incidents had happened, which more than counterbalanced this fortunate event, and served to open his eyes with regard to the rashness of an undertaking into which his youth and high fortune had betrayed him.

LEWIS, fully sensible of the dangerous situation to which his kingdom had been reduced during the former campaign, was resolved, by every expedient, to prevent the return of like perils, and to break the confederacy of his enemies. The pope was nowise disposed to push the French to extremity; and, provided they did not return to take possession of Milan, his interests rather led him to preserve the balance among the contending parties. He accepted, therefore, of Lewis's offer to renounce the council of Lyons; and he took off the excommunication which his predecessor and himself had fulminated against that king and his kingdom. Ferdinand was now fast declining in years; and as he entertained no farther ambition than that of keeping possession of Navarre, which he had subdued by his arms and policy, he readily hearkened to the proposals of Lewis for prolonging the truce another year; and he even shewed an inclination of forming a more intimate connexion with that monarch. Lewis had dropped hints of his intention to marry his second daughter Renée, either to Charles, prince of Spain, or his brother Ferdinand, both of them grandsons of the Spanish monarch; and he declared his resolution of bestowing on her, as her portion, his claim to the dutchy of Milan. Ferdinand not only embraced these proposals with joy; but also engaged the emperor, Maximilian, in the same views, and procured his accession to a treaty, which opened so inviting a prospect of aggrandising their common grandchildren.

WHEN

CHAP. XXVII. 1514.

When Henry was informed of Ferdinand's renewal of the truce with Lewis, he fell into a violent rage, and loudly complained, that his father-in-law had first, by high promises and professions, engaged him in enmity with France, and afterwards, without giving him the least warning, had now again sacrificed his interests to his own selfish purposes, and had left him exposed alone to all the danger and expence of the war. In proportion to his easy credulity, and his unsuspecting reliance on Ferdinand, was the vehemence with which he exclaimed against the treatment which he met with; and he threatened revenge for this egregious treachery and breach of faith [w]. But he lost all patience when informed of the other negotiation by which Maximilian was also seduced from his alliance, and in which propofals had been agreed to, for the marriage of the prince of Spain with the daughter of France. Charles, during the lifetime of the late king, had been affianced to Mary, Henry's younger sister; and, as the prince now approached the age of puberty, the king had expected the immediate completion of the marriage, and the honourable settlement of a sister, for whom he had entertained a tender affection. Such a complication, therefore, of injuries gave him the highest displeasure, and inspired him with a desire of expressing his disdain towards those who had imposed on his youth and inexperience, and had abused his too great facility.

The duke of Longueville, who had been made prisoner at the battle of Guinegate, and who was still detained in England, was ready to take advantage of all these dispositions of Henry, in order to procure a peace, and even an alliance, which he knew to be passionately desired by his master. He represented to the king that Anne, queen of France, being lately dead, a door was thereby opened for

[w] Petrus de Angleria, Epist. 545, 546.

CHAP. XXVII. 1514.

an affinity which might tend to the advantage of both kingdoms, and which would ſerve to terminate honourably all the differences between them: That ſhe had left Lewis no male children; and as he had ever entertained a ſtrong deſire of having heirs to the crown, no marriage ſeemed more ſuitable to him than that with the princeſs of England, whoſe youth and beauty afforded the moſt flattering hopes in that particular: That, though the marriage of a princeſs of ſixteen with a king of fifty-three might ſeem unſuitable, yet the other advantages attending the alliance were more than a ſufficient compenſation for this inequality: And that Henry, in looſening his connexions with Spain, from which he had never reaped any advantage, would contract a cloſe affinity with Lewis, a prince who, through his whole life, had invariably maintained the character of probity and honour.

As Henry ſeemed to hearken to this diſcourſe with willing ears, Longueville informed his maſter of the probability which he diſcovered of bringing the matter to a happy concluſion; and he received full powers for negotiating the treaty. The articles were eaſily adjuſted between the monarchs. Lewis agreed that Tournay ſhould remain in the hands of the Engliſh; that Richard de la Pole ſhould be baniſhed to Metz, there to live on a penſion aſſigned him by Lewis; that Henry ſhould receive payment of a million of crowns, being the arrears due by treaty to his father and himſelf; and that the princeſs Mary ſhould bring four hundred thouſand crowns as her portion, and enjoy as large a jointure as any queen of France, even the former, who was heireſs of Britanny. The two princes alſo agreed on the ſuccours with which they ſhould mutually ſupply each other, in caſe either of them were attacked by an enemy [x].

Peace with France. 7th Aug.

[x] Du Tillet.

In

CHAP. XXVII.

1514. 9th Octob.

In consequence of this treaty, Mary was sent over to France with a splendid retinue, and Lewis met her at Abbeville, where the espousals were celebrated. He was enchanted with the beauty, grace, and numerous accomplishments of the young princess; and being naturally of an amorous disposition, which his advanced age had not entirely cooled, he was seduced into such a course of gaiety and pleasure, as proved very unsuitable to his declining state of health[y]. He died in less than three months after the marriage, to the extreme regret of the French nation, who, sensible of his tender concern for their welfare, gave him, with one voice, the honourable appellation of *father of his people*.

1515. 1st Jan.

Francis, duke of Angoulême, a youth of one and twenty, who had married Lewis's eldest daughter, succeeded him on the throne; and, by his activity, valour, generosity, and other virtues, gave prognostics of a happy and glorious reign. This young monarch had been extremely struck with the charms of the English princess; and, even during his predecessor's life-time, had paid her such assiduous court, as made some of his friends apprehend that he had entertained views of gallantry towards her. But being warned that, by indulging this passion, he might probably exclude himself from the throne, he forbore all farther addresses; and even watched the young dowager with a very careful eye during the first months of her widowhood. Charles Brandon, duke of Suffolk, was, at that time, in the court of France, the most comely personage of his time, and the most accomplished in all the exercises which were then thought to befit a courtier and a soldier. He was Henry's chief favourite; and that monarch had even once entertained thoughts of marrying him to his sister, and had given indulgence to the mutual passion which took place be-

[y] Brantome Eloge de Louis XII.

tween them. The queen aſked Suffolk, whether he had now the courage, without farther reflection, to eſpouſe her? And ſhe told him, that her brother would more eaſily forgive him for not aſking his conſent, than for acting contrary to his orders. Suffolk declined not ſo inviting an offer; and their nuptials were ſecretly celebrated at Paris. Francis, who was pleaſed with this marriage, as it prevented Henry from forming any powerful alliance by means of his ſiſter[z], interpoſed his good offices in appeaſing him: And even Wolſey, having entertained no jealouſy of Suffolk, who was content to participate in the king's pleaſures, and had no ambition to engage in public buſineſs, was active in reconciling the king to his ſiſter and brother-in-law; and he obtained them permiſſion to return to England.

[z] Petrus de Angleria, Epiſt. 544.

NOTES

TO THE

THIRD VOLUME.

NOTE [A], p. 4.

IN the fifth year of the king *the commons complained of the government about the king's perſon, his court, the exceſſive number of his ſervants, of the abuſes in the Chancery, King's Bench, Common Pleas, Exchequer, and of grievous oppreſſions in the country, by the great multitudes of maintainers of quarrels* (men linked in confederacies together), *who behaved themſelves like kings in the country, ſo as there was very little law or right, and of the other things which they ſaid were the cauſe of the late commotions under Wat Tyler.* Parl. Hiſt. vol. i. p. 365. This irregular government, which no king and no houſe of commons had been able to remedy, was the ſource of the licentiouſneſs of the great, and turbulency of the people, as well as tyranny of the princes. If ſubjects would enjoy liberty, and kings ſecurity, the laws muſt be executed.

In the ninth of this reign the commons alſo diſcovered an accuracy and a jealouſy of liberty which we ſhould little expect in thoſe rude times. "It was agreed by parliament," ſays Cotton, p. 309, "that the ſubſidy of wools, wool fells, "and ſkins, granted to the king until the time of Mid-"ſummer then enſuing, ſhould ceaſe from the ſame time "unto the feaſt of St. Peter *ad vincula;* for that thereby "the king ſhould be interrupted for claiming ſuch grant as "due." See alſo Cotton, p. 198.

NOTE [B], p. 16.

KNYGHTON, p. 2715, &c. The ſame author, p. 2680, tells us, that the king, in return to the meſſage, ſaid, that he would not, for their deſire, remove the meaneſt ſcullion

ſcullion from his kitchen. This author alſo tells us, that the king ſaid to the commiſſioners, when they harangued him, that he ſaw his ſubjects were rebellious, and his beſt way would be to call in the king of France to his aid. But it is plain that all theſe ſpeeches were either intended by Knyghton merely as an ornament to his hiſtory, or are falſe. For (1) When the five lords accuſe the king's miniſters in the next parliament, and impute to them every raſh action of the king, they ſpeak nothing of theſe replies which are ſo obnoxious, were ſo recent, and are pretended to have been ſo public. (2) The king, ſo far from having any connexions at that time with France, was threatened with a dangerous invaſion from that kingdom. This ſtory ſeems to have been taken from the reproaches afterwards thrown out againſt him, and to have been transferred by the hiſtorians to this time, to which they cannot be applied.

NOTE [C], p. 21.

WE muſt except the 12th article, which accuſes Brembre of having cut off the heads of twenty-two priſoners, confined for felony or debt, without warrant or proceſs of law. But, as it is not conceivable what intereſt Brembre could have to treat theſe felons and debtors in ſuch a manner, we may preſume that the fact is either falſe, or miſrepreſented. It was in theſe men's power to ſay any thing againſt the perſons accuſed: No defence or apology was admitted: All was lawleſs will and pleaſure.

They are alſo accuſed of deſigns to murder the lords: But theſe accuſations either are general, or deſtroy one another. Sometimes, as in article 15th, they intend to murder them by means of the mayor and city of London: Sometimes, as in article 28th, by trial and falſe inqueſts: Sometimes, as in article 28th, by means of the king of France, who was to receive Calais for his pains.

NOTE [D], p. 23.

IN general, the parliament in thoſe days never paid a proper regard to Edward's ſtatute of treaſons, though one of the moſt advantageous laws for the ſubject that has ever been enacted. In the 17th of the king, *the dukes of Lancaſter and Glocester*

Gloceſter complain to Richard that ſir Thomas Talbot, with others of his adherents, conſpired the death of the ſaid dukes in divers parts of Cheſhire, as the ſame was confeſſed and well known: and praying that the parliament may judge of the fault. Whereupon the king and the lords in the parliament judged the ſame fact to be open and high treaſon: And hereupon they award two writs, the one to the ſheriff of York, and the other to the ſheriffs of Derby, to take the body of the ſaid ſir Thomas, returnable in the King's Bench in the month of Eaſter then enſuing. And open proclamation was made in Weſtminſter-hall, that upon the ſheriff's return, and at the next coming in of the ſaid ſir Thomas, the ſaid Thomas ſhould be convicted of treaſon, and incur the loſs and pain of the ſame: And all ſuch as ſhould receive him, after the proclamation, ſhould incur the ſame loſs and pain. Cotton, p. 354. It is to be obſerved, that this extraordinary judgment was paſſed in a time of tranquillity. Though the ſtatute itſelf of Edward III. reſerves a power to the parliament to declare any new ſpecies of treaſon, it is not to be ſuppoſed that this power was reſerved to the houſe of lords alone, or that men were to be judged by a law *ex poſt facto*. At leaſt, if ſuch be the meaning of the clauſe, it may be affirmed that men were at that time very ignorant of the firſt principles of law and juſtice.

NOTE [E], p. 30.

IN the preceding parliament the commons had ſhewn a diſpoſition very complaiſant to the king; yet there happened an incident in their proceedings which is curious, and ſhews us the ſtate of the houſe during that period. The members were either country gentlemen or merchants, who were aſſembled for a few days, and were entirely unacquainted with buſineſs; ſo that it was eaſy to lead them aſtray, and draw them into votes and reſolutions very different from their intention. Some petitions concerning the ſtate of the nation were voted; in which, among other things, the houſe recommended frugality to the king; and for that purpoſe deſired that the court ſhould not be ſo much frequented as formerly by *biſhops* and *ladies*. The king was diſpleaſed with this freedom: The commons very humbly craved pardon: He was not ſatisfied unleſs they would name the mover of the petitions. It happened to be one Haxey,

whom the parliament, in order to make atonement, condemned for this offence to die the death of a traitor. But the king, at the desire of the archbishop of Canterbury and the prelates, pardoned him. When a parliament in those times, not agitated by any faction, and being at entire freedom, could be guilty of such monstrous extravagance, it is easy to judge what might be expected from them in more trying situations. See Cotton's Abridg. p. 361, 362.

NOTE [F], p. 43.

TO show how little credit is to be given to this charge against Richard, we may observe, that a law, in the 13 Edw. III. had been enacted against the continuance of sheriffs for more than one year: But the inconvenience of changes having afterwards appeared from experience, the commons, in the twentieth of this king, applied by petition, that the sheriffs might be continued; though that petition had not been enacted into a statute, by reason of other disagreeable circumstances which attended it. See Cotton, p. 361. It was certainly a very moderate exercise of the dispensing power in the king to continue the sheriffs, after he found that that practice would be acceptable to his subjects, and had been applied for by one house of parliament: Yet is this made an article of charge against him by the present parliament. See art. 18. Walsingham, speaking of a period early in Richard's minority, says, *But what do acts of parliament signify, when after they are made they take no effect; since the king, by the advice of the privy council, takes upon him to alter, or wholly set aside all those things which by general consent had been ordained in parliament?* If Richard, therefore, exercised the dispensing power, he was warranted by the examples of his uncles and grandfather, and, indeed, of all his predecessors from the time of Henry III. inclusive.

NOTE [G], p. 52.

THE following paſſage in Cotton's Abridgment, p. 196. ſhows a ſtrange prejudice againſt the church and churchmen: *The commons afterwards coming into the parliament, and making their proteſtation, ſhewed, that for want of good redreſs about the king's perſon, in his houſehold, in all his courts, touching maintainers in every county, and purveyors, the commons were daily pilled, and nothing defended againſt the enemy, and that it ſhould ſhortly deprive the king, and undo the ſtate. Wherefore, in the ſame government they entirely require redreſs. Whereupon the king appointed ſundry biſhops, lords, and nobles, to ſit in privy-council about theſe matters: Who ſince that they muſt begin at the head, and go at the requeſt of the commons, they, in the preſence of the king, charged his confeſſor not to come into the court but upon the four principal feſtivals.* We ſhould little expect that a popiſh privy-council, in order to preſerve the king's morals, ſhould order his confeſſor to be kept at a diſtance from him. This incident happened in the minority of Richard. As the popes had for a long time reſided at Avignon, and the majority of the ſacred college were Frenchmen, this circumſtance naturally increaſed the averſion of the nation to the papal power: But the prejudice againſt the Engliſh clergy cannot be accounted for from that cauſe.

NOTE [H], p. 223.

THAT we may judge how arbitrary a court that of the conſtable of England was, we may peruſe the patent granted to the earl of Rivers in this reign, as it is to be found in Spellman's Gloſſary in verb. *Conſtabularius*; as alſo, more fully in Rymer, vol. xi. p. 581. Here is a clauſe of it: *Et ulterius de uberiori gratia noſtra eidem comiti de Rivers plenam poteſtatem damus ad cognoſcendum & procedendum, in omnibus & ſingulis cauſis et negotiis, de et ſuper crimine leſæ majeſtatis ſeu ſuper occaſione cæteriſque cauſis, quibuſcunque per præfatum comitem de Rivers, ut conſtabularium Angliæ—quæ in curia conſtabularii Angliæ ab antiquo*, viz, *tempore dicti domini Gulielmi conqueſtoris, ſeu aliquo tempore citra tractari, audiri, examinari, aut decidi conſueverant, aut jure debuerant, aut debent, cauſaſque et negotia prædicta*

cum omnibus et ſingulis emergentibus, incidentibus & connexis, audiendum, examinandum, et fine debito terminandum, etiam ſummarie et de plano, ſine ſtrepitu et figura juſtitiæ, ſola facti veritate inſpecta, *ac etiam manu regia, ſi opportunum viſum fuerit eidem comiti de Rivers, vices noſtras, appellatione remota.* The office of conſtable was perpetual in the monarchy; its juriſdiction was not limited to times of war, as appears from this patent, and as we learn from Spellman: Yet its authority was in direct contradiction to *Magna Charta*; and it is evident that no *regular* liberty could ſubſiſt with it. It involved a full dictatorial power, continually ſubſiſting in the ſtate. The only check on the crown, beſides the want of force to ſupport all its prerogatives, was that the office of conſtable was commonly either hereditary or during life; and the perſon inveſted with it was, for that reaſon, not ſo proper an inſtrument of arbitrary power in the king. Accordingly the office was ſuppreſſed by Henry VIII. the moſt arbitrary of all the Engliſh princes. The practice, however, of exerciſing martial law ſtill ſubſiſted; and was not aboliſhed till the Petition of Right under Charles I. This was the epoch of true liberty, confirmed by the Reſtoration, and enlarged and ſecured by the Revolution.

NOTE [I], p. 234.

WE ſhall give an inſtance: Almoſt all the hiſtorians, even Comines, and the continuator of the annals of Croyland, aſſert that Edward was about this time taken priſoner by Clarence and Warwic, and was committed to the cuſtody of the archbiſhop of York, brother to the earl; but being allowed to take the diverſion of hunting by this prelate, he made his eſcape, and afterwards chaſed the rebels out of the kingdom. But that all the ſtory is falſe, appears from Rymer, where we find that the king, throughout all this period, continually exerciſed his authority, and never was interrupted in his government. On the 7th of March 1470 he gives a commiſſion of array to Clarence, whom he then imagined a good ſubject; and on the 23d of the ſame month we find him iſſuing an order for apprehending him. Beſides, in the king's manifeſto againſt the duke and earl (Clauſe 10. Edward IV. m. 7, 8.), where he enumerates all their treaſons, he mentions no ſuch fact:

He

He does not ſo much as accuſe them of exciting young Welles's rebellion: He only ſays that they exhorted him to continue in his rebellion. We may judge how ſmaller facts will be miſrepreſented by hiſtorians, who can in the moſt material tranſactions miſtake ſo groſsly. There may even ſome doubt ariſe with regard to the propoſal of marriage made to Bona of Savoy; though almoſt all the hiſtorians concur in it, and the fact be very likely in itſelf: For there are no traces in Rymer of any ſuch embaſſy of Warwic's to France. The chief certainty in this and the preceding reign ariſes either from public records, or from the notice taken of certain paſſages by the French hiſtorians. On the contrary, for ſome centuries after the conqueſt the French hiſtory is not complete without the aſſiſtance of Engliſh authors. We may conjecture, that the reaſon of the ſcarcity of hiſtorians during this period was the deſtruction of the convents, which enſued ſoon after: Copies of the more recent hiſtorians not being yet ſufficiently diſperſed, theſe hiſtories have periſhed.

NOTE [K], p. 274.

SIR Thomas More, who has been followed, or rather tranſcribed, by all the hiſtorians of this ſhort reign, ſays, that Jane Shore had fallen into connexions with lord Haſtings; and this account agrees beſt with the courſe of the events: But in a proclamation of Richard's, to be found in Rymer, vol. xii. p. 204. the marquis of Dorſet is reproached with theſe connexions. This reproach, however, might have been invented by Richard, or founded only on popular rumour; and is not ſufficient to overbalance the authority of ſir Thomas More. The proclamation is remarkable for the hypocritical purity of manners affected by Richard: This bloody and treacherous tyrant upbraids the marquis and others with their gallantries and intrigues as the moſt terrible enormities.

NOTE [L], p. 297.

EVERY one that has peruſed the ancient monkiſh writers knows, that however barbarous their own ſtyle, they are full of alluſions to the Latin claſſics, eſpecially the poets.

There ſeems alſo, in thoſe middle ages, to have remained many ancient books that are now loſt. Malmeſbury, who flouriſhed in the reign of Henry I. and king Stephen, quotes Livy's deſcription of Cæſar's paſſage over the Rubicon. Fitz-Stephen, who lived in the reign of Henry II. alludes to a paſſage in the larger hiſtory of Salluſt. In the collection of letters, which paſſes under the name of Thomas a Becket, we ſee how familiar all the ancient hiſtory and ancient books were to the more ingenious and more dignified churchmen of that time, and conſequently how much that order of men muſt have ſurpaſſed all the other members of the ſociety. That prelate and his friends call each other philoſophers in all the courſe of their correſpondence, and conſider the reſt of the world as ſunk in total ignorance and barbariſm.

NOTE [M], p. 383.

STOWE, Baker, Speed, Biondi, Hollingſhed, Bacon. Some late writers, particularly Mr. Carte, have doubted whether Perkin were an impoſtor, and have even aſſerted him to be the true Plantagenet. But to refute this opinion, we need only reflect on the following particulars: (1) Though the circumſtances of the wars between the two roſes be, in general, involved in great obſcurity, yet is there a moſt luminous ray thrown on all the tranſactions during the uſurpation of Richard, and the murder of the two young princes, by the narrative of ſir Thomas More, whoſe ſingular magnanimity, probity, and judgment, make him an evidence beyond all exception! No hiſtorian, either of ancient or modern times, can poſſibly have more weight: He may alſo be juſtly eſteemed a contemporary with regard to the murder of the two princes: For though he was but five years of age when that event happened, he lived and was educated among the chief actors during the period of Richard: And it is plain, from his narrative itſelf, which is often extremely circumſtantial, that he had the particulars from the eye-witneſſes themſelves: His authority, therefore, is irreſiſtible; and ſufficient to overbalance a hundred little doubts and ſcruples and objections. For in reality his narrative is liable to no ſolid objection, nor is there any miſtake detected in it. He ſays, indeed, that the

protector's partisans, particularly Dr. Shaw, spread abroad rumours of Edward IV.'s pre-contract with Elizabeth Lucy; whereas it now appears from record, that the parliament afterwards declared the king's children illegitimate, on pretence of his pre-contract with lady Eleanor Talbot. But it must be remarked, that neither of these pre-contracts was ever so much as attempted to be proved: And why might not the protector's flatterers and partisans have made use sometimes of one false rumour, sometimes of another? Sir Thomas More mentions the one rumour as well as the other, and treats them both lightly, as they deserved. It is also thought incredible by Mr. Carte, that Dr. Shaw should have been encouraged by Richard to calumniate openly his mother the dutchess of York, with whom that prince lived in good terms. But if there be any difficulty in this supposition, we need only suppose that Dr. Shaw might have concerted, in general, his sermon with the protector or his ministers, and yet have chosen himself the particular topics, and chosen them very foolishly. This appears, indeed, to have been the case, by the disgrace into which he fell afterwards, and by the protector's neglect of him. (2) If sir Thomas's quality of contemporary be disputed with regard to the duke of Gloucester's protectorate, it cannot possibly be disputed with regard to Perkin's imposture: He was then a man, and had a full opportunity of knowing and examining and judging of the truth. In asserting that the duke of York was murdered by his uncle, he certainly asserts, in the most express terms, that Perkin who personated him was an impostor. (3) There is another great genius who has carefully treated this point of history; so great a genius as to be esteemed with justice one of the chief ornaments of the nation, and indeed one of the most sublime writers that any age or nation has produced. It is lord Bacon I mean, who has related at full length, and without the least doubt or hesitation, all the impostures of Perkin Warbec. If it be objected, that lord Bacon was no contemporary, and that we have the same materials as he upon which to form our judgment; it must be remarked, that lord Bacon plainly composed his elaborate and exact history from many records and papers which are now lost, and that, consequently, he is always to be cited as an original historian. It were very strange, if Mr. Carte's opinion were just, that among all the papers which lord Bacon perused, he never

never found any reaſon to ſuſpect Perkin to be the true Plantagenet. There was at that time no intereſt in defaming Richard III. Bacon, beſides, is a very unbiaſſed hiſtorian, nowiſe partial to Henry: We know the detail of that prince's oppreſſive government from him alone. It may only be thought, that in ſumming up his character, he has laid the colours of blame more faintly than the very facts he mentions ſeem to require. Let me remark, in paſſing, as a ſingularity, how much Engliſh hiſtory has been beholden to four great men, who have poſſeſſed the higheſt dignity in the law, More, Bacon, Clarendon, and Whitlocke. (4) But if contemporary evidence be ſo much ſought after, there may in this caſe be produced the ſtrongeſt and moſt undeniable in the world. The queen-dowager, her ſon the marquis of Dorſet, a man of excellent underſtanding, ſir Edward Woodville, her brother, ſir Thomas St. Leger, who had married the king's ſiſter, ſir John Bourchier, ſir Robert Willoughby, ſir Giles Daubeney, ſir Thomas Arundel, the Courtneys, the Cheneys, the Talbots, the Stanleys, and, in a word, all the partiſans of the houſe of York, that is, the men of chief dignity in the nation; all theſe great perſons were ſo aſſured of the murder of the two princes, that they applied to the earl of Richmond, the mortal enemy of their party and family; they projected to ſet him on the throne, which muſt have been utter ruin to them if the princes were alive; and they ſtipulated to marry him to the princeſs Elizabeth, as heir to the crown, who in that caſe was no heir at all. Had each of thoſe perſons written the memoirs of his own times, would he not have ſaid that Richard murdered his nephews? Or would their pen be a better declaration than their actions of their real ſentiments? (5) But we have another contemporary authority ſtill better than even theſe great perſons, ſo much intereſted to know the truth: It is that of Richard himſelf: He projected to marry his niece, a very unuſual alliance in England, in order to unite her title with his own. He knew therefore her title to be good: For as to the declaration of her illegitimacy, as it went upon no proof, or even pretence of proof, it was always regarded with the utmoſt contempt by the nation, and was conſidered as one of thoſe parliamentary tranſactions ſo frequent in that period, which were ſcandalous in themſelves, and had no manner of authority. It was even ſo much deſpiſed as not to be reverſed by parliament, after Henry and Elizabeth were on

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the throne. (6) We have alſo, as contemporary evidence, the univerſal eſtabliſhed opinion of the age, both abroad and at home. This point was regarded as ſo uncontroverted, that when Richard notified his acceſſion to the court of France, that court was ſtruck with horror at his abominable parricide, in murdering both his nephews, as Philip de Comines tells us; and this ſentiment went to ſuch an unuſual height, that, as we learn from the ſame author, the court would not make the leaſt reply to him. (7) The ſame reaſons which convinced that age of the parricide ſtill ſubſiſt, and ought to carry the moſt undoubted evidence to us; namely, the very circumſtance of the ſudden diſappearance of the princes from the Tower, and their appearance no where elſe. Every one ſaid, *they have not eſcaped from their uncle, for he makes no ſearch after them: He has not conveyed them elſewhere: For it is his buſineſs to declare ſo, in order to remove the imputation of murder from himſelf. He never would needleſsly ſubject himſelf to the infamy and danger of being eſteemed a parricide, without acquiring the ſecurity attending that crime. They were in his cuſtody: He is anſwerable for them: If he gives no account of them, as he has a plain intereſt in their death, he muſt, by every rule of common ſenſe, be regarded as the murderer. His flagrant uſurpation, as well as his other treacherous and cruel actions, makes no better be expected from him. He could not ſay, with Cain, that he was not his nephews' keeper.* This reaſoning, which was irrefragable at the very firſt, became every day ſtronger, from Richard's continued ſilence, and the general and total ignorance of the place of theſe princes' abode. Richard's reign laſted about two years beyond this period; and ſurely he could not have found a better expedient for diſappointing the earl of Richmond's projects, as well as juſtifying his own character, than the producing of his nephews. (8) If it were neceſſary, amidſt this blaze of evidence, to produce proofs, which in any other caſe would have been regarded as conſiderable, and would have carried great validity with them, I might mention Dighton and Tyrrel's account of the murder. This laſt gentleman eſpecially was not likely to ſubject himſelf to the reproach of ſo great a crime, by an impoſture which it appears did not acquire him the favour of Henry. (9) The duke of York, being a boy of nine years of age, could not have made his eſcape without the aſſiſtance of ſome elder perſons. Would it not have been their chief concern inſtantly to convey intelligence of ſo great

great an event to his mother the queen-dowager, to his aunt the dutchess of Burgundy, and to the other friends of the family? The dutchess protected Simnel; a project which, had it been successful, must have ended in the crowning of Warwic, and the exclusion of the duke of York! This, among many other proofs, evinces that she was ignorant of the escape of that prince, which is impossible had it been real. (10) The total silence with regard to the persons who aided him in his escape, as also with regard to the place of his abode during more than eight years, is a sufficient proof of the imposture. (11) Perkin's own account of his escape is incredible and absurd. He said that murderers were employed by his uncle to kill him and his brother: They perpetrated the crime against his brother; but took compassion on him, and allowed him to escape. This account is contained in all the historians of that age. (12) Perkin himself made a full confession of his imposture no less than three times; once when he surrendered himself prisoner, a second time when he was set in the stocks at Cheapside and Westminster, and a third time, which carries undoubted evidence, at the foot of the gibbet on which he was hanged. Not the least surmise that the confession had ever been procured by torture: And surely the last time he had nothing farther to fear. (13) Had not Henry been assured that Perkin was a ridiculous impostor, disavowed by the whole nation, he never would have allowed him to live an hour after he came into his power; much less would he have twice pardoned him. His treatment of the innocent earl of Warwic, who in reality had no title to the crown, is a sufficient confirmation of this reasoning. (14) We know with certainty whence the whole imposture came, namely, from the intrigues of the dutchess of Burgundy: She had before acknowledged and supported Lambert Simnel, an avowed impostor. It is remarkable that Mr. Carte, in order to preserve the weight of the dutchess's testimony in favour of Perkin, suppresses entirely this material fact: A strong effect of party prejudices, and this author's desire of blackening Henry VII. whose hereditary title to the crown was defective. (15) There never was at that time any evidence or shadow of evidence produced of Perkin's identity with Richard Plantagenet. Richard had disappeared when near nine years of age, and Perkin did not appear till he was a man. Could any one, from his aspect pretend then to be sure of the identity? He had got some stories

concerning Richard's childhood, and the court of England: But all that it was neceſſary for a boy of nine to remark or remember, was eaſily ſuggeſted to him by the dutcheſs of Burgundy, or Frion, Henry's ſecretary, or by any body that had ever lived at court. It is true, many perſons of note were at firſt deceived; but the diſcontents againſt Henry's government, and the general enthuſiaſm for the houſe of York, account ſufficiently for this temporary deluſion. Every body's eyes were opened long before Perkin's death. (16) The circumſtance of finding the two dead bodies in the reign of Charles II. is not ſurely indifferent. They were found in the very place which More, Bacon, and other ancient authors, had aſſigned as the place of interment of the young princes: The bones correſponded, by their ſize, to the age of the princes: The ſecret and irregular place of their interment, not being in holy ground, proves that the boys had been ſecretly murdered: And in the Tower no boys but thoſe who are very nearly related to the crown can be expoſed to a violent death: If we compare all theſe circumſtances we ſhall find that the inference is juſt and ſtrong, that they were the bodies of Edward the Fifth and his brother; the very inference that was drawn at the time of the diſcovery.

Since the publication of this Hiſtory, Mr. Walpole *has publiſhed his Hiſtoric Doubts concerning Richard* III. *Nothing can be a ſtronger proof how ingenious and agreeable that gentleman's pen is, than his being able to make an inquiry concerning a remote point of Engliſh hiſtory, an object of general converſation. The foregoing note has been enlarged on account of that performance.*

NOTE [N], p. 397.

ROT. Parl. 3 H. VII. n. 17. The preamble is remarkable, and ſhows the ſtate of the nation at that time. "The king, our ſovereign lord, remembereth how by our "unlawful maintainances, giving of liveries, ſigns and to-"kens, retainders by indentures, promiſes, oaths, writ-"ings, and other embraceries of his ſubjects, untrue de-"meanings of ſheriffs in making pannels, and untrue "returns by taking money, by juries, &c. the policy of "this nation is moſt ſubdued." It muſt indeed be confeſſed, that ſuch a ſtate of the country required great diſcre-

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tionary power in the ſovereign; nor will the ſame maxims of government ſuit ſuch a rude people, that may be proper in a more advanced ſtage of ſociety. The eſtabliſhment of the Star-chamber, or the enlargement of its power in the reign of Henry VII. might have been as wiſe as the abolition of it in that of Charles I.

NOTE [O], p. 400.

THE duke of Northumberland has lately printed a houſehold book of an old earl of that family who lived at this time: The author has been favoured with the peruſal of it; and it contains many curious particulars, which mark the manners and way of living in that rude, not to ſay barbarous age; as well as the prices of commodities. I have extracted a few of them from that piece, which gives a true picture of ancient manners, and is one of the moſt ſingular monuments that Engliſh antiquity affords us: For we may be confident, however rude the ſtrokes, that no baron's family was on a nobler or more ſplendid footing. The family conſiſts of 166 perſons, maſters and ſervants: Fifty-ſeven ſtrangers are reckoned upon every day: On the whole 223. Two-pence halfpenny are ſuppoſed to be the daily expence of each for meat, drink, and firing. This would make a groat of our preſent money: Suppoſing proviſions between three and four times cheaper, it would be equivalent to fourteen-pence: No great ſum for a nobleman's houſe-keeping; eſpecially conſidering, that the chief expence of a family at that time conſiſted in meat and drink: For the ſum allotted by the earl for his whole annual expence is 1118 pounds ſeventeen ſhillings and eight-pence; meat, drink, and firing coſt 796 pounds eleven ſhillings and two-pence, more than two thirds of the whole: In a modern family it is not above a third, p. 157, 158, 159. The whole expence of the earl's family is managed with an exactneſs that is very rigid, and, if we make no allowance for ancient manners, ſuch as may ſeem to border on an extreme; inſomuch, that the number of pieces which muſt be cut out of every quarter of beef, mutton, pork, veal, nay ſtock-fiſh and ſalmon, are determined, and muſt be entered and accounted for by the different clerks appointed for that purpoſe: If a ſervant be abſent a day, his meſs is ſtruck off: If he go on my lord's buſineſs, board wages is allowed him,

him, eight-pence a day for his journey in winter, five-pence in ſummer: When he ſtays in any place, two-pence a day are allowed him, beſide the maintenance of his horſe. Somewhat above a quarter of wheat is allowed for every month throughout the year; and the wheat is eſtimated at five ſhillings and eight-pence a quarter. Two hundred and fifty quarters of malt are allowed, at four ſhillings a quarter: Two hogſheads are to be made of a quarter; which amounts to about a bottle and a third of beer a day to each perſon, p. 4. and the beer will not be very ſtrong. One hundred and nine fat beeves are to be bought at All-hallow-tide, at thirteen ſhillings and four-pence a-piece: And twenty-four lean beeves to be bought at St. Helens at eight ſhillings a-piece: Theſe are to be put into the paſtures to feed; and are to ſerve from Midſummer to Michaelmas; which is conſequently the only time that the family eats freſh beef: During all the reſt of the year they live on ſalted meat, p. 5. One hundred and ſixty gallons of muſtard are allowed in a year; which ſeems indeed requiſite for the ſalt beef, p. 18. Six hundred and forty-ſeven ſheep are allowed, at twenty-pence a-piece; and theſe ſeem alſo to be all eat ſalted, except between Lammas and Michaelmas, p. 5. Only twenty-five hogs are allowed at two ſhillings a-piece; twenty-eight veals at twenty-pence; forty lambs at ten-pence or a ſhilling, p. 7. Theſe ſeem to be reſerved for my lord's table, or that of the upper ſervants, called the knight's table. The other ſervants, as they eat ſalted meat almoſt through the whole year, and with few or no vegetables, had a very bad and unhealthy diet: So that there cannot be any thing more erroneous than the magnificent ideas formed of *the Roaſt Beef of Old England*. We muſt entertain as mean an idea of its cleanlineſs: Only ſeventy ells of linen at eight-pence an ell are annually allowed for this great family: No ſheets were uſed: This linen was made into eight table-cloths for my lord's table; and one table-cloth for the knights, p. 16. This laſt, I ſuppoſe, was waſhed only once a month. Only forty ſhillings are allowed for waſhing throughout the whole year; and moſt of it ſeems expended on the linen belonging to the chapel. The drinking, however, was tolerable, namely, ten tuns and two hogſheads of Gaſcogny wine, at the rate of four pounds thirteen ſhillings and four-pence a ton, p. 6. Only ninety-one dozen of candles for the whole year, p. 14. The fa-

mily roſe at ſix in the morning, dined at ten, and ſupped at four in the afternoon: The gates were all ſhut at nine, and no farther ingreſs or egreſs permitted, p. 314. 318. My lord and lady have ſet on their table, for breakfaſt, at ſeven o'clock in the morning, a quart of beer; as much wine; two pieces of ſalt fiſh, ſix red-herrings, four white ones, or a diſh of ſprats. In fleſh days half a chyne of mutton, or a chyne of beef boiled, p. 73. 75. Maſs is ordered to be ſaid at ſix o'clock, in order, ſays the houſehold-book, that all my lord's ſervants may riſe early, p. 170. Only twenty-four fires are allowed, beſide the kitchen and hall, and moſt of theſe have only a peck of coals a day allowed them, p. 99. After Lady-day no fires permitted in the rooms, except half-fires in my lord's and lady's, and lord Piercy's and the nurſery, p. 101. It is to be obſerved that my lord kept houſe in Yorkſhire, where there is certainly much cold weather after Lady-day. Eighty chalders of coals, at four ſhillings and two-pence a chalder, ſuffices throughout the whole year; and becauſe coal will not burn without wood, ſays the houſehold-book, ſixty-four loads of great wood are alſo allowed, at twelve-pence a load, p. 22. This is a proof that grates were not then uſed. Here is an article. *It is deviſed that from henceforth no capons to be bought but only for my lord's own meſs, and that the ſaid capons ſhall be bought for two-pence a-piece, lean, and fed in the poultry; and maſter chamberlain and the ſtewards be fed with capons, if there be ſtrangers ſitting with them*, p. 102. Pigs are to be bought at three-pence or a groat a-piece: Geeſe at the ſame price: Chickens at a halfpenny: Hens at two-pence, and only for the above-mentioned tables. Here is another article. *Item, it is thought good that no plovers be bought at no ſeaſon but only in Chriſtmas and principal feaſts, and my lord to be ſerved therewith, and his board-end, and none other, and to be bought for a penny a-piece, or a penny halfpenny at moſt*, p. 103. Woodcocks are to be bought at the ſame price. Partridges at two-pence, p. 104, 105. Pheaſants a ſhilling; peacocks the ſame, p. 106. My lord keeps only twenty-ſeven horſes in his ſtable at his own charge: His upper ſervants have allowance for maintaining their own horſes, p. 126. Theſe horſes are, ſix gentle horſes as they are called, at hay and hard meat throughout the whole year, four palfreys, three hobbies and nags, three ſumpter horſes,

horſes, ſix horſes for thoſe ſervants to whom my lord furniſhes a horſe, two ſumpter horſes more, and three mill horſes, two for carrying the corn, and one for grinding it; whence we may infer, that mills, either water or wind mills, were then unknown; at leaſt very rare: Beſides theſe, there are ſeven great trotting horſes for the chariot or waggon. He allows a peck of oats a day, beſides loaves made of beans, for his principal horſes; the oats at twenty pence, the beans at two ſhillings a quarter. The load of hay is at two ſhillings and eight-pence. When my lord is on a journey he carries thirty-ſix horſemen along with him; together with bed and other accommodation, p. 157. The inns, it ſeems, could afford nothing tolerable. My lord paſſes the year in three country-ſeats, all in Yorkſhire, Wryſel, Leckenfield, and Topclyffe; but he has furniture only for one: He carries every thing along with him, beds, tables, chairs, kitchen utenſils, all which we may conclude were ſo coarſe, that they could not be ſpoilt by the carriage: Yet ſeventeen carts and one waggon ſuffices for the whole, p. 391. One cart ſuffices for all his kitchen utenſils, cooks beds, &c. p. 388. One remarkable circumſtance is, that he has eleven prieſts in his houſe, beſides ſeventeen perſons, chanters, muſicians, &c. belonging to his chapel: Yet he has only two cooks for a family of 223 perſons, p. 325 *. Their meals were certainly dreſſed in the ſlovenly manner of a ſhip's company. It is amuſing to obſerve the pompous and even royal ſtyle aſſumed by this Tartar chief: He does not give any orders, though only for the right making of muſtard, but it is introduced with this preamble, *It ſeemeth good to us and our council.* If we conſider the magnificent and elegant manner in which the Venetian and other Italian noblemen then lived, with the progreſs made by the Italians in literature and the fine arts, we ſhall not wonder that they conſidered the ultramountaine nations as barbarous. The Flemiſh alſo ſeem to have much excelled the Engliſh and even the French. Yet the earl

* In another place mention is made of four cooks, p. 388. But I ſuppoſe that the two ſervants called, in p. 325, groom of the larder and child of the ſcullery, are, in p. 388, comprehended in the number of cooks.

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is ſometimes not deficient in generoſity: He pays, for inſtance, an annual penſion of a groat a year to my lady of Walſingham, for her intereſt in Heaven; the ſame ſum to the holy blood at Hales, p. 337. No mention is any where made of plate; but only of the hiring of pewter veſſels. The ſervants ſeem all to have bought their own clothes from their wages.

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